Two Oscars for Harold Russell

Learning from the Book of Negroes

The Lioness of Acadia

The Beaver

CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

February | March 2007

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The Beaver
CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

Published bimonthly by
Canada's National History Society

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Change of address? Please notify Member Services 6 weeks prior to change.

Editorial guidelines can be found on our website. We assume no responsibility for unsolicited material.

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ISSN 0005-7517

Annual Subscription (6 issues):
Canada, $29.95 (includes GST).
Residents of Manitoba, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia add $1.96 on a one-year subscription. Please add $8 a year for U.S. orders and $15 a year for foreign orders.
Single copy price: $6.95
Subscribe by phone, fax, mail, e-mail, or through our website: TheBeaver.ca

GST Registration Number: 13868 1408 RT

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Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0T6

U.S. Postmaster:
Send address changes to
The Beaver
c/o UPS Supply Chain Solutions, Box 369,
Pembina, North Dakota 58271

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40063001
Registration No. 09708.

Postage paid in Winnipeg.

Issued February 2007

Printed in Canada on recycled paper

We acknowledge the financial support of the **Government of Canada** through the *Publications Assistance Program* and the *Canada Magazine Fund* toward our mailing and editorial costs.

Canada

Chance encounter

Beaver stories commonly originate in either of two ways. A writer queries us with a brilliant idea, and we say (enthusiastically), yes! Or we pull them out of our giant editorial brains ourselves. Occasionally, however, the origin is more serendipitous. Last June, as I was wandering about the Carlu in Toronto for the National Magazine Awards, gazing at all the displays of fine work produced by Canada's magazine industry, I bumped into a former colleague from the *Winnipeg Free Press*, where I had toiled sometime in the previous millennium. Like me, Larry (that's "Lawrence" to you) Hill had popped out of the swinging door of that institution and gone on to do other things, notably write some fine novels, including *Any Known Blood*, which tells the story of five generations of an African-Canadian-American family. He was at the Carlu that evening as a nominee for a National Magazine Award in the essay category (which he won); I was there in case our *Beaver* nominee won (he didn't), but among the things rattling around in my head that evening – really! – was how we might mark the 200th anniversary of the legislative end of the slave trade in the British Empire in 1807, which would nicely coincide with February's Black History Month and with our own February/March 2007 edition of *The Beaver*. When Larry told me his next novel was titled *The Book of Negroes* and it used as source material a unique archival document by the very same name stored at the Nova Scotia Archives, I had one of those cartoon light-bulb moments. And so we have "Freedom Bound," page 16, by Lawrence Hill, which illuminates a remarkable artifact – a sort of ur-document – in which Canada's Black Loyalists can find their ancestors' names and trace their history in North America.

THOMAS FRICKE

Because, if we can, we like to make a living link between past and present, we also asked Richard Gallion, president of the Black Loyalist Heritage Society, if he would lend his image to the story. A tenth-generation Nova Scotian with several family lines stretching back to the archival *Book of Negroes*, Mr. Gallion is a former Ontario Provincial Police officer, retired and living again in his birthplace, Shelburne, Nova Scotia, around where many Black Loyalists settled in the late eighteenth century. Unhappily, his tenure with the Black Loyalist Heritage Society has coincided with an arson-related fire last spring that destroyed the society's Birchtown offices, along with twenty years of research, records, and artifacts. His is a task of coordinating restoration and reconstitution of this vital part of Canadian heritage. He gently points out that Canadians may contribute to a national fund to assist the society to recover from this tragedy at any Scotiabank branch.

As the fire that destroyed the Black Loyalist History Society offices was a crime, crime scene investigators were called in. Normally, for most people, life offers few encounters with such people – but for television, where CSI dramas rule the (air)waves. As you'll read in our CSI cover story beginning on page 24, Canadians have taken a leading role in the science of crime scene investigation, advancing frontiers in both poison detection and ballistics and their weight in law. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, no less, made his way to Canada to investigate one of our CSI institutions, returning to Washington with a notion to establish the same. He may have returned to Washington with a very nice frock, too. But we don't know that.

Doug Whiteway
Editor
editors@historysociety.ca

COVER: JEAN-MARIE BENOIT

***With Fondest Love*, a Valentine's Day greeting card dating sometime between 1880 and 1910.**

The Beaver

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The *Book of Negroes* records the names of blacks who fled New York for Nova Scotia on British ships in 1783. Today, thousands of Canada's Black Loyalists can find their ancestors in this unique document.

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A double-header on two Canadians who changed the world of crime scene investigation.

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Album I've been drilling on the railroad all the livelong day. **62**

Letters

Eastward ho!

Re: "Viking Farewell" in the December 2006/January 2007 issue: It's an interesting and fair retelling of the Vikings' story in Greenland and Canada, but the identification of Vinland with Miramichi Bay in New Brunswick is just plain wrong.

Vinland as discovered by Leif Eriksson is not the same place as the L'Anse aux Meadows site. The flora, fauna, climate, and geography do not match, so we must look elsewhere.

But where? The saga has Leif sailing south along the Labrador coastline, to a place easily identified as Porcupine Strand, north of Sandwich Bay. It then has him sail two days out to sea "before a northeaster" – i.e., southwest. It is impossible to sail southwest at any point of the Labrador shore before reaching the Belle Isle Strait! So where did he go? Well, if we discard something that's flatly impossible in the saga, we can legitimately make some suggestions of our own and try them out.

The important identifiers of Leif's Vinland are the landfall; hops; the climate – rarely even freezing during Leif's winter stay – the length of the shortest day; hardwoods; the infamous grapes; and a complete lack of encounters with native people. Eastern Newfoundland abounds with hops. Hardwoods are to be found in abundance in eastern Newfoundland. To this day there are portions of eastern Newfoundland where the climate remains mild year-round. The shortest day specified is compatible with all of Newfoundland, having been calculated at anywhere between 46 and 52 degrees north. There are places in eastern Newfoundland where apparently natives haven't lived.

And, finally, the notorious grapes. Your article states that the northern limit of grapes is inland from Chaleur Bay in New Brunswick: about 47 degrees, 55 minutes north. I dispute this: I have a vine of wild grapes growing on my fence, right here in Winnipeg – 49 degrees 54 minutes north. In any event there's a lot of Newfoundland south of the latitude of Chaleur Bay. There are historical records of grapes in Newfoundland in the 1600s. And the climate of Newfoundland back in Leif's days – during the Little Climatic Optimum – was warmer than it is now or was in the 1600s. So there is no reason at all to exclude Newfoundland as a place to find the mysterious Vinland, and all sorts of good reasons to think it is there.

Finally, it's only necessary to look at the map. People coming south from Greenland would either encounter Newfoundland itself, or the Belle Isle Strait, and would not have kept on into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, away from Newfoundland; or they would have had to steer far out east into the Atlantic, then south, and then take an impossibly complicated westward course into the Gulf to get to Miramichi Bay without sighting land. Neither course makes the least bit of sense.

All in all, eastern Newfoundland is the place to look.

PETER LACEY
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

The walrus and the Norse

I have always been an admirer of Birgitta Wallace and her research, and was delighted to read her article on Vinland. Although I may disagree with some of her interpretations, there was one point in the sidebar, "Why did the Norse leave?" that, factually speaking, is probably not a reason for the brevity of the Norse sojourn in southern Canada and (perhaps?) the U.S.: "The Greenlanders turned their eyes north to the walrus hunt for hides and ivory, which were easy to ship to Europe and which had great value in trade." Actually, the Greenlanders could have turned their eyes *south* of L'Anse aux Meadows if they wanted to hunt for plentiful walrus! Until the eighteenth century, walrus were found as far south as Massachusetts, and one of the largest herds in the world inhabited the southeastern waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence until the late 1700s. Why did these walrus disappear? They were hunted to extinction by a much more successful group of European hunters than the Norse had been several centuries earlier.

ANDREW MACLEOD
LONDON, ONTARIO

Will the real Sammy D please stand up?

I would just like to pass along a few comments on the artwork used to illustrate my recent article on Samuel de Champlain and Edward Hayes ["Was New France born in England?" December 2006/January 2007]. While they came from respected public collections, their content and condition illuminate more than what was probably bargained for in providing basic visual support to the article.

The opening image, the painting *L'Arrivée de Champlain à Quebec*, is a splendid confection of operatic historicity. Readers should know that in no way did Champlain's arrival in 1603 look anything like this. There were no women and squalling children, no priest (as seems to be portrayed) of any order on hand. It's a rich fantasy tableau, typical of the genre and the times in which it was produced.

While the reproduction of his 1613 map of New France is from an image provided by the bibliothèque nationale in Quebec, it should have been banned from circulation long ago. Champlain never produced printed maps in colour. An original authentic print of this map resides in the Joe C.W. Armstrong Canadiana Collection. Someone at the Asso-

ciation of Canadian Map Libraries took it upon himself to hand-colour a facsimile. This adulterated version has since found its way into circulation. It degrades the splendid work of Champlain's engraver, David Pelletier, and is part of an unfortunate and discredited trend of making historic maps "prettier" and "more interesting" by slathering them in colours they never had.

Finally, I shudder every time I see the "portrait" of Champlain sourced at the National Archives of Canada (page 42). This is not Champlain. It's Signor Michel Particelli, France's Italian-born controlleur-général of finances in the mid-seventeenth century. The origins of the image are convoluted, but suffice it to say that in the 1850s a Canadian government functionary was dispatched to Paris to find a portrait of Champlain. When none turned up, it was arranged for a Paris artist named Louis César Joseph Ducornet to choose a suitable inspiration. He selected a seventeenth-century engraved portrait of Particelli by Balthasar Moncornet and created a Champlain portrait from it. A Moncornet "original" of Champlain was then said to be found in the bibliothèque nationale in Paris. The Champlain portrait's authenticity was seriously questioned by Victor Paltsits in 1904. H.P. Biggar confirmed it unequivocally as a fake while overseeing the Champlain Society's translations of Champlain's works, and he published to that effect in *Canadian Historical Review* in 1920. The painting reproduced in the article, by Théophile Hamel of Quebec in 1866, is an early example of the influence of the Ducornet fake, on which it is directly based.

I should like to add a personal mea culpa. My author biography was remiss not to note the work of Janet Ritch, who has taken on a Herculean task for the Champlain Society's new bilingual edition of Champlain's works by turning his peculiarly difficult prose into something a modern English reader can fathom. She's in the midst of a remarkable bit of linguistic scholarship and detective work, and without it I would not have known the key differences between what Champlain actually wrote and how Richard Hakluyt mistranslated *Des Sauvages*, providing an erroneous basis for other translations right into the twentieth century.

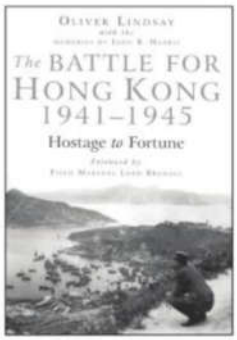
DOUGLAS HUNTER
PORT MCNICOLL, ONTARIO

Web rights

In the December 2006 /January 2007 edition on page 8, you had a wonderful story on the Chung Collection at the UBC Library. I enjoyed reading the article but I wanted to provide the correct web address for the online collection. It should be <www.library.ubc.ca/chung>.

CHERYL KINKAID
VANCOUVER, B.C.

***The Beaver* welcomes readers' comments.** E-mail us at editors@historysociety.ca or write to *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0T6 Canada. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.



The Battle for Hong Kong, 1941-1945
Hostage to Fortune
Oliver Lindsay

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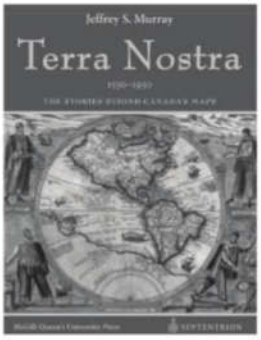
"Lindsay's book is magnificently graphic. It not only plunges the reader into the pill boxes that defended Hong Kong but gives heart-rending descriptions of the suffering in the internment camps." **Oxford Times**



Terra Nostra, 1550-1950
The Stories Behind Canada's Maps
Jeffrey S. Murray

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"Well written and visually splendid, a refreshingly different perspective on the story of our land." **The Globe and Mail**

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Currents

Our home & native...

Kerosene lamp

AS THE NIGHTS GROW LONGER, give a thought not only to life before electricity, but also to nights before a clean, brightly burning lamp oil hit the market. With whale oil prices in the mid-1800s rising as the number of whales diminished, and the most common alternatives an explosive "burning fluid" made of turpentine and alcohol or the pale yellow light of candles and hearth fires, people needed a new fuel to keep the darkness at bay.

Enter Nova Scotia's Dr. Abraham Gesner. In August 1846, at a PEI lecture, the geologist/doctor/chemist introduced the audience to "kerselain" – from the Greek word for "wax oil" – which we now know as kerosene. Distilled from coal, it gave off a bright light, was smokeless, and was not volatile like the "burning fluid."

However, history views the invention as secondary to what Gesner did for the petrochemical industry, which may never have existed without the refining processes he perfected. Imperial Oil recognized his contribution by constructing an engraved monument on Gesner's gravesite "as a token of appreciation and for his important contribution to the oil industry." **–R.W.**

Living History

Actor and playwright Andrew Moodie brings the story of Elijah McCoy to the stage.

Staging the Real McCoy

ON OPENING NIGHT OF LINDA GRIFFITHS'S PLAY *THE DUCHESS* IN Calgary, Alberta, a man started a conversation with actor and playwright Andrew Moodie, who had been cast as Noel Coward. When the phrase "the real McCoy" came up, the stranger asked Moodie if he knew its origins. Moodie says, "I lied and said it originated from the Hatfields and the McCoys." The stranger corrected him.

Born in 1843, in Colchester, Ontario, Elijah McCoy was the son of George and Mildred McCoy, two former slaves who fled to Canada from Kentucky. George fought for the British in the Upper Canada Rebellion and received 160 acres of land for his service.

At sixteen, Elijah accepted a mechanical engineering apprenticeship in Edinburgh, Scotland, returning to Canada with an education he rightfully expected would lead to a career in his field of study. When the American Civil War ended, Elijah and his family moved to Detroit. McCoy was a highly skilled engineer, receiving at least seventy-two patents for his various inventions over his lifetime, but initially he could only find menial work due to racial prejudice. While working as a fireman and oiler, he came up with the idea for a lubrication cup that used power from the steam engine to spread oil to moving parts without having to stop the train.

McCoy worked on his invention at home and patented his idea on June 23, 1872. He pitched it to the Michigan Central Railroad, which embraced the system. It became the industry standard. When engineers wanted the original, not a copycat or inferior substitute, they asked for "the real McCoy." The phrase eventually entered the vernacular, meaning "the original and the best."

TAKE THE DAY OFF

February 1

To note that in 1854 the Parliament buildings in Quebec burned to the ground. Replace your smoke-detector batteries.

"Here I am, standing in front of this white Calgarian and he's telling me about an important figure in black Canadian history," says Moodie. "My father did a very good job of teaching me about black Canadian heroes, and Elijah McCoy never came up."

Doubting the accuracy of the story, Moodie researched McCoy for himself, discovering that there was, indeed, a gap in his knowledge. "I felt ashamed that I didn't believe that the phrase was based on a black Canadian, and that shame drove me to write a play – shame is a great source of creativity for me." The result was *The Real McCoy*, which explores Elijah McCoy's career, personal life, and his "struggle between science and faith."

Much of the material on McCoy that Moodie found came from children's books. That style of storytelling and the obscurity of the story inspired him to tell the tale in the form of a parable. "Unlike a simile, its parallel meaning is unspoken, implicit. 'To speak in parables' has come to suggest obscurity. Parables are the simplest of narratives: they sketch a setting, describe an action and its result; they often involve a character facing a moral dilemma or making a questionable decision and suffering the consequences of that choice."

The play enjoyed a successful run at Factory Theatre in Toronto in early 2006, but Moodie has found it a difficult sell outside the city. When he inquired about submitting the work for consideration in one festival, an employee told him the theatre would never produce a play with five black actors, because it wouldn't be able to cross cast them in the other plays that season. "It seems that Elijah can still suffer from racial discrimination almost a century after his death," says Moodie.

McCoy never became rich off his creations. He used the modest payments he did receive to continue his work, eventually joining with other investors to start the Elijah McCoy Manufacturing Company in 1920. McCoy married twice, but never had any children. His first wife died in 1872; his second in 1923, after which McCoy's health deteriorated and dementia set in. He died on October 10, 1929. The city of Detroit celebrated Elijah McCoy Day in 1975 and named a street in his honour, but in Canada he remains relatively unknown.

Moodie considers the dismissal to be an example of Canadians not celebrating their own. "I don't see Elijah's colour as being the largest hurdle," he says. "Canadians love American black historical figures, from Martin Luther King to Muhammad Ali to Barack Obama. There are many obscure stories of great Canadians of all colours, and we dismiss them. It's part of our colonial heritage."

Moodie decided early on to forgo the confines of strict biography, but says it was a difficult decision to make. "McCoy's life and work came to symbolize an adherence to quality that people would only be satisfied with the 'thing itself' and not a copy. I decided to adhere to what I call the Macbeth rule of theatrical historical truth; chances are, the real Macbeth never consorted with witches, but it makes great theatre. It's important to say, 'This is theatre, not history class.'"

Perception, rather than precision, guides Moodie's approach to historical accuracy. His first responsibilities, he says, are to the actors and the audience. "My final responsibility is to historical truth. My hope is that the audience will understand something about the life of who I perceive Elijah McCoy to be, and at the same time feel something about the man." **– R.W.**

CHRIS SHAMPTON

THE WEB

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Video clips, audio recordings, archival documents, and images in a comic-book layout bring the history of the Alaska Highway from a Yukon perspective vividly to life. Hear interviews with people who lived along the highway and see pack dogs in action. Learn the military motivations for building the highway and how it changed not only travel, but also lives in our northwest.

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Genealogy buffs have a new tool to trace their Yukon roots. Search the death records from Green's Mortuary, and learn more about how people lived by learning how they died. See if you lost family in 1897's killer avalanche on the Chilkoot. Maybe your lineage includes members of the Sourdough Stampede Association, though what the organization did remains a mystery.

February 18

To commemorate the 1884 opening of Calgary's first school. Sharpen your pencils.

February 20

To celebrate the appointment in 1930 of Canada's first woman senator, Cairine Wilson. Roar.

Currents

Moment

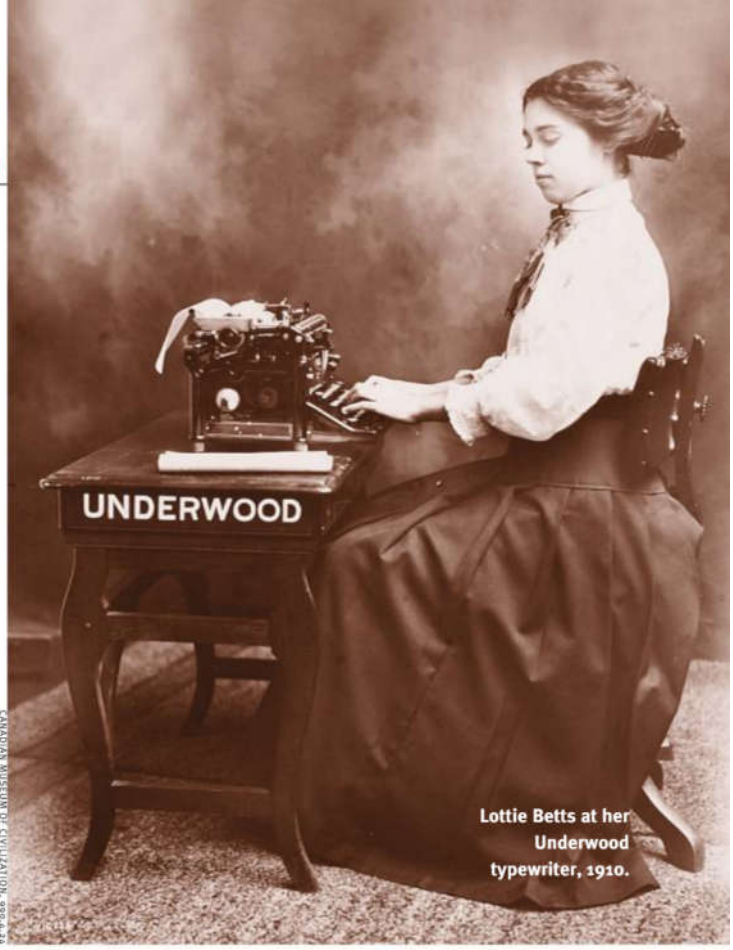
March 9, 1923: Lottie Betts Tushingham wins Canadian typewriting championship

LOTTIE BETTS TUSHINGHAM ENTERS MASSEY HALL in Toronto to compete in the annual Canadian typewriting championship. She is already a winner before she takes her place onstage before 3,000 spectators – setting the world record for accuracy at a 1910 event at Madison Square Garden was one of her past victories. She is able to withstand the physical demands of competition (contests last for an hour or more) plus she is meticulous and fast – her top speed is 103 words per minute. This time, 99 words per minute is enough to net the silver cup.

Frank McGurrin, official stenographer for the federal court in Salt Lake City, and Louis Taub, a Cincinnati typing instructor, began the typewriting-contest craze with an 1888 match. Betts became internationally renowned during almost two decades of speed-typing contests. As spectacular as they were, these competitions were about more than a fad. They illustrated how the world of work and the lives of women were changing at the turn of the twentieth century.

Lottie Betts was born in Ottawa in 1889. Her family moved to Toronto thirteen years later, and shortly after, she learned to type. Like anyone working on a computer today, Betts used a QWERTY keyboard and typed without looking at it. In 1909, Charles E. Smith of the Underwood Company persuaded her to leave Toronto to come to New York and train with his team. She took a break from competition after marrying in 1913, but was back at the keys by 1921. When she retired in 1928, she'd won eighteen contests.

Some of the contestants came up with imaginative ways of boosting their word-per-minute scores. For example, writes Darren Wershler-Henry in *The Iron Whim: A Fragmented History of Typewriting*, not only were tables and chairs adjusted to suit the typist, but contestants also wore visors covered in green cloth that were long enough to act as blinders and keep them focused on the task. Smith came up with the "speed paper insert," whereby a finished piece of paper was removed and a fresh page inserted while the carriage was returning. It was, notes Wershler-Henry, "a task like trying to thread a moving needle."



CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION 996.4.24

Lottie Betts at her Underwood typewriter, 1910.

It was also important to be accurate, as mistakes affected a contestant's final score. Besides obvious errors such as missing a word or transposing letters, an uneven margin or a character that was not clearly printed or perfectly centred also counted as errors.

As much as the typewriter was a novelty, however, it was also an important business tool. "At the turn of the century," writes Wershler-Henry, "the emergence of large corporations and global markets produced a blizzard of documents – accounting ledgers, purchase orders, memos, correspondence, and so on – which in turn required increasing numbers of clerical workers to produce, reproduce, sort, and file these documents. The people [who] began to fill these roles were educated, middle-class women." Men made more money for doing the same clerical work, but office employment paid more than other jobs available to women.

Lottie Betts Tushingham was one of the women who began typing as a way to take advantage of new opportunities and support her family in a fast-changing workplace. Through the mania for typewriting contests, she made a perfectly centred, fully legible and lasting mark. **– Jennifer O'Connor**

March 6

To commemorate the 1834 incorporation of York, which returned to its original name of Toronto, Upper Canada's first city. Rent *Centre of the Universe* on DVD.

Mini-series recreates massacre

John N. Smith, director of *Prairie Giant* and *The Boys of St. Vincent*, has joined with author Guy Vanderhaeghe to turn his 1996 Governor General's Award-winning novel *The Englishman's Boy* into a screenplay for a two-part miniseries, set to air on CBC in late 2007 or early 2008. Filming got underway in Saskatchewan in summer 2006.

A complex novel, *The Englishman's Boy* follows intersecting storylines set in different time periods, one of which follows events at the end of May 1873, when American wolf hunters shattered the relative peace of the Canadian prairies in what became known as the Cypress Hills Massacre.

"This is very much a cautionary tale," says Vanderhaeghe. "It is a western and an examination of the mythic political power of westerns. It is also a little-known tale of Canada."

The title character, played by Canadian newcomer Michael Eisner, comes to Fort Benton in Montana with his employer, who unexpectedly dies. When Eisner's character is cast out of Fort Benton after a fight with a hotel owner, he joins a gang of American wolfers tracking a group of Cree who they believe stole several of their horses. Led by Thomas Handwick (R.H. Thomson), the gang loses the trail, ending up at Abel Farwell, a post in Cypress Hills.

Fueled by whisky, racism, and anger over the stolen horses, the wolfers attack a settlement of Assiniboine at Cypress Hills on the morning of June 1 after Handwick's horse goes missing. The wolfers shoot and kill between twenty and thirty Assiniboine fleeing the encampment, most of them unarmed. Several of the women are captured and repeatedly raped.

ALLAN FELDEL

Filmmaker John N. Smith uses dominoes to explain camera angles to actor Michael Eisner and author Guy Vanderhaeghe.

When news of the massacre reaches Ottawa, the government implements a plan that had been in the works for several years and sends the North-West Mounted Police to patrol the vast, developing prairie region.

Over $1 million of the film's $11.7-million budget was spent recreating Fort Benton fifty kilometres north of Regina between Earl Grey and Southey. Sets were also created for the Montana frontier and Farwell's Post, now known as Battle Creek. "We intend to leave the set standing at the completion of shooting, so it can be used as the basis for Saskatchewan's first studio backlot," says executive producer Kevin DeWalt. **– R.W.**

Beaver Bites

Beaver maple-sugar mould

Profiles of Canadian artifacts both beautiful and beaverful

This wooden maple-sugar mould dates back to mid-nineteenth-century Quebec. March and April were the start of "sugaring off," the process of tapping trees, collecting sap, and boiling off the water to create syrup. Eastern aboriginal people taught these techniques to settlers, who produced a range of products, including sugar, syrup, and maple butter. Moulds often took the shape of Canadian symbols such as the beaver and maple leaf.

The first sugar product in North America, maple sugar dominated the market until 1875, when cane sugar took over. Today, Canada supplies about eighty-five percent of the world's maple sugar, making us the largest producer.

PHOTO BY MATTHEW BEVERLY FROM *THE MAPLE LEAF FOREVER: A CELEBRATION OF CANADIAN SYMBOLS*. DONNA AND NIGEL HUTCHINS. BOSTON MILLS PRESS. DISTRIBUTED BY FIREFLY BOOKS. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION.

March 17

To observe the 59th anniversary of the first jet engine built in Canada, the Avro *Chinook*, in Malton, Ontario, in 1948. Join the jet set.

March 22

To mark the 1765 printing of Canada's first hardcover book, a catechism. Fall on your knees.

Currents

Calendar

Beth Ezekiel Synagogue

Ontario

L'Chaim – To Life: The Story of the Beth Ezekiel Synagogue

Tour the last small-town synagogue in Canada at Owen Sound, home to a Jewish community for more than one hundred years. Grey Roots has collected photographs, archival items, and artifacts while working with the local residents to gather stories and family histories – piecing together the community's history.

Ongoing to the end of 2007
Grey Roots Museum and Archives, Owen Sound
www.greyroots.com
www.beethezekiel.org • 1-877-473-9766

Prince Edward Island

Great Maritime Achievers in Science and Technology

Learn about the scientific inventiveness of more than thirty Maritimers in this travelling bilingual exhibit from Science East. Get interactive, hands-on experience with eleven modules on experiments covering geochemistry and palaeontology to astronomy and railway building to making paper from wood.

February 4 to April 29, 2007
Eptek Art & Culture Centre, Summerside
www.scienceeast.nb.ca • 902-888-837

Manitoba

Seventy-Five Years of Crafts

Celebrate with the Manitoba Crafts Museum at a special exhibit of seventy-five pieces from its expansive collection of weaving, beadwork, pottery, woodwork, and more dating as far back as one thousand years. See the Famous Names Quilt, a World War II-era fundraising quilt with signatures from Winston Churchill, Mackenzie King, the Dionne Quintuplets, Lucille Ball, James Cagney, and others.

Opens May 2, 2007
Manitoba Crafts Museum and Library, Winnipeg
www.mts.net/~mcml • 204-487-6117

The puck stops here

An excited crowd of hockey fans gathers on Saturday afternoon for one of the last games of the season. As the game is about to begin, there are strong feelings between rival towns and speculation about the neutrality of the referee. Skaters rush to one end in opening play, and no one disputes the referee's call of "score," because of something new: A net traps the puck.

In Beamsville on the Niagara Peninsula, William Alexis Vosburgh (1845–1917), known locally as The Captain for his regimental service during the 1866 Fenian Raids, operated a blacksmith's shop where buggies and drays were built and countless horses shod. He also built a full-size ice rink behind his shop, where for ten cents one could skate for an entire afternoon. The rink was covered, with dressing rooms for men and women and an area for spectators to stand. The rink was popular because, unlike farm ponds, there was no danger of falling through the ice.

The place was busy from November until March, Vosburgh employees keeping the ice fresh with a daily sprinkle from a watering can. The Captain sometimes staged a children's festival on Saturday afternoons, with games on the ice and candied apples, popcorn, and cider for refreshment. At the end of the season, the village participated in a masquerade, parading in costume and skating to music by local musicians.

But local hockey games were the most exciting. For Beamsville, the keenest competition was with nearby Grimsby. When those teams played, as many as five hundred noisy fans watched. The players would try to shoot the puck between two metal pipes dug into the ice, and the referees determined whether the puck actually passed between the pipes. Heated arguments became common. Referees were often replaced, accused of making unfair decisions.

In March 1889, Vosburgh, tired of the quarrelling, struck two sets of irons across which he had a local fisherman stretch netting; now the matter of goals was decided by a neutral umpire. The idea was soon adopted by the Southern Ontario Hockey Association.

Captain Vosburgh was a handsome, energetic entrepreneur in the 1880s, with eleven children and ideas ahead of his time. His arena, which burned to the ground in 1898, was one of the first covered rinks in Canada. And his creative solution to a rancorous problem resulted in an important piece of hockey equipment – the first official goal.

– David Stouck

A goalie defends the two posts that comprised earlier versions of the hockey "net."

WILLIAM STOTT BOOTS MUSEUM

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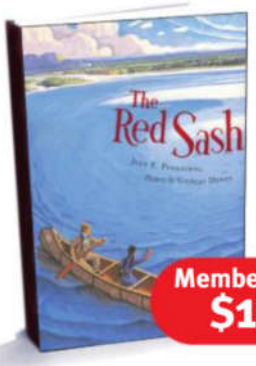
Member Price $49 book and CD

New!

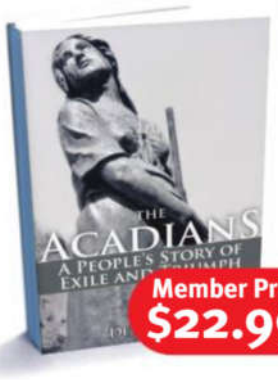
Music in Canada:
Capturing Landscape and Diversity
by Elaine Keillor
Kwakwaka'wakw welcome songs, an aria from Joseph Quesnel's 1808 opera *Lucas et Cécile*, the Tin Pan Alley hits of Shelton Brooks, and the contemporary work of Claude Vivier and Blue Rodeo all dance together in Canada's musical heritage. Keillor offers an unprecedented history of musical expressions in this compelling musical survey and accompanying CD. (Softcover) 512 pp., illustrations, index.
Publisher List Price: $59.95



Member Price $12

Youth

The Red Sash
written by Jean E. Pendziwol; illustrated by Nicolas Debon
As the Fort William rendezvous draws near, a young Métis boy helps prepare for a feast. Off to snare hares, a vicious storm breaks out and he sights canoes in danger as they paddle for land. (Hardcover) 32 pp., illustrations, map. Ages 8 – 12
Publisher List Price: $16.95



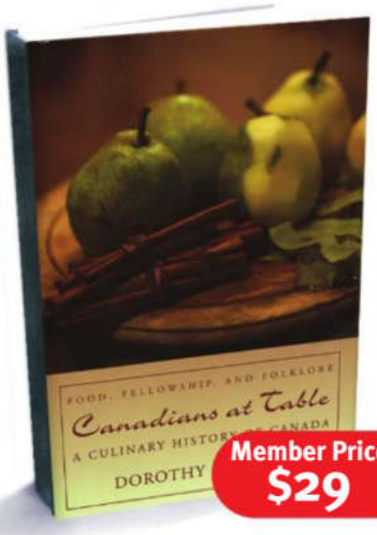
Member Price $22.99

Last Chance

Acadians: A People's Story of Exile and Triumph
by Dean Jobb
A vivid and compelling account of one of the darkest episodes in Canadian history and one of the most inspiring – the 1755 deportation of people of French ancestry from Canada's east coast. Celebrate the ultimate endurance of the Acadian people. (Softcover) 296 pp., bibliography, index.
Publisher List Price: $24.99

Feature Selection

Canadians at Table:
A Culinary History of Canada
by Dorothy Duncan
From the self-sufficient First Nations and early settlers to the convenience foods of today, Duncan offers an introduction to the diverse culinary history of Canada. Delve into the food, fellowship, and folklore of Canadian cuisine in this wonderful kitchen companion of seasonal recipes and anecdotes. (Hardcover) 248 pp., illustrations, index.
Publisher List Price: $35



Member Price $29

Member Price $24

Publisher's Pick

Telling Our Stories: Omushkego Legends and Histories from Hudson Bay
by Louis Bird
Bird, a distinguished aboriginal storyteller and historian, has been recording the stories and memories of Omushkego (Swampy Cree) communities along western Hudson and James Bays for many years. Delve into the vivid legends and historical stories from this collection. (Softcover) 270 pp., index.
Publisher List Price: $27.95

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Explorations

Paul Litt on

Canada's Highbrow Bastion

The Canada Council will never give a penny to *Canadian Idol*. And that's not such a bad thing.

Fifty years ago, the Canada Council sprang into existence. Well, not quite sprang. It was finessed through Parliament in a backhanded fashion after six years of vacillation by the Liberal government of Louis St. Laurent.

It's an oft-told tale, but one worth telling again. The 1951 report of the Massey Commission, named after its chairman, Vincent Massey, recommended that the government establish a "Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Letters, Humanities and Social Sciences." Massey had long admired the Arts Council of Great Britain and dreamed of fathering a colonial clone. At the time, American philanthropic foundations were, embarrassingly, the main patrons of the arts and letters in Canada.

The commission's proposal made many cabinet members nervous. They were coming to accept social programs to support the poor, aged, and unemployed. But the arts and letters – weren't they for eccentrics and ladies with time on their hands? While the arts lobby pushed hard throughout the early 1950s, powerful politicians resisted passively but implacably.

Then came a happy conjunction of circumstances. Two wealthy tycoons died, leaving the government a windfall in succession duties. Two mandarins – let's call them Supply and Demand – met on their way to work in Ottawa. To make the council more palatable to Parliament, it was presented as part of a bill offering capital funding for universities and assigned duties as the Canadian commission for UNESCO. The legislation passed just before the St. Laurent government fell in 1957.

Officers attending the inaugural meeting of the Canada Council, April 1957. From left to right: Eustache Morin, Jules Bazin, Georges Vanier, Andrée Paradis, Brooke Claxton, James Muir, Georges-Henri Lévesque.

The Canada Council was a product of the intellectual climate of the times. For Massey and his ilk, the big story of modern Western history was the spread of democratic rights and privileges. Rising literacy rates opened the possibility of cultivating the kind of responsible, civic-minded, and judicious citizenry required to make mass democracy work. In the Canadian context, this process was intertwined with nation building as the country defined an independent destiny in the postwar world. Canada needed culture both to succeed as a liberal democracy and to claim its place among civilized nations.

Whether culture would follow was uncertain. Modern history had a counter-narrative: the rise of mass culture, borne on successive waves of new media – first popular newspapers and magazines, then movies, radio, and television. In the Massey Commission's strategy for national cultural development, the council was a bastion of high culture to resist the tide of vulgarity and groupthink spilling across the border.

The council was supposed to be independent of government – financed by an endowment, and administered at arm's-length from meddlesome politi-

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cians. Its early career tested this ideal. The council, for example, started giving annual grants to performing arts companies devoted to European high cultural forms such as ballet, symphony, and theatre. Having such "world class" fare, it was thought, bolstered Canada's international status. They expanded with council largesse to proportions unsustainable without it, leaving patron and client clutching one another to hold each other up. The council's initial endowment soon seemed inadequate, and it began asking Parliament for more. Politicians don't like handing over money without getting something in return, and appointees to the board were aware of who appointed them. Nudge-nudge, wink-wink, say no more. At times the influence was blatant, such as when the council accepted funds earmarked for national unity in the wake of the Parti Québécois victory in 1976.

Intensified feuding with Quebec over cultural sovereignty combined with the heady nationalism and prosperity of the Centennial era spurred the federal government to introduce subsidies for film, Canadian content quotas, publishing grants, and so on. Suddenly Canada had a cultural policy apparatus more comprehensive than that envisioned by the Massey Report twenty years earlier. Yet the thinking behind it differed significantly. The mass culture critics' worst fears had failed to materialize, so the arguments originally deployed to justify subsidies for high culture were weakened. The governments' new initiatives focused on cultural industries, aiming to develop the Canadian presence in the *business* of culture. The council's relative importance was greatly diminished, still more so when scholarly funding was spun off to a new granting body in 1978.

The council adapted to the new regime by introducing Canadian content rules for some of its clients and taking on the administration of block grants to Canadian publishers. It also reached out to ethno-cultural minorities, including First Nations, to distance itself from its Eurocentric roots. But the council could not fully embrace the new egalitarian spirit by going down-market, for to abandon its commitment to Art would be to undermine its very *raison d'être*. And there remained a political base for its work. The romance of culture still bewitched the educated middle class, inspiring a determination to refine the taste of those who lacked equivalent cultural capital. But whenever the unenlightened seemed to get "it," it became necessary to redefine "it" in some suitably obscure avant-garde fashion to maintain the cultural hierarchy. The Canada Council was a convenient base for this ongoing edification project. The politics of its adjudications generated sufficient gossip and intrigue to sustain a sense of community among Gzowski-listening cultural nationalists sea to sea.

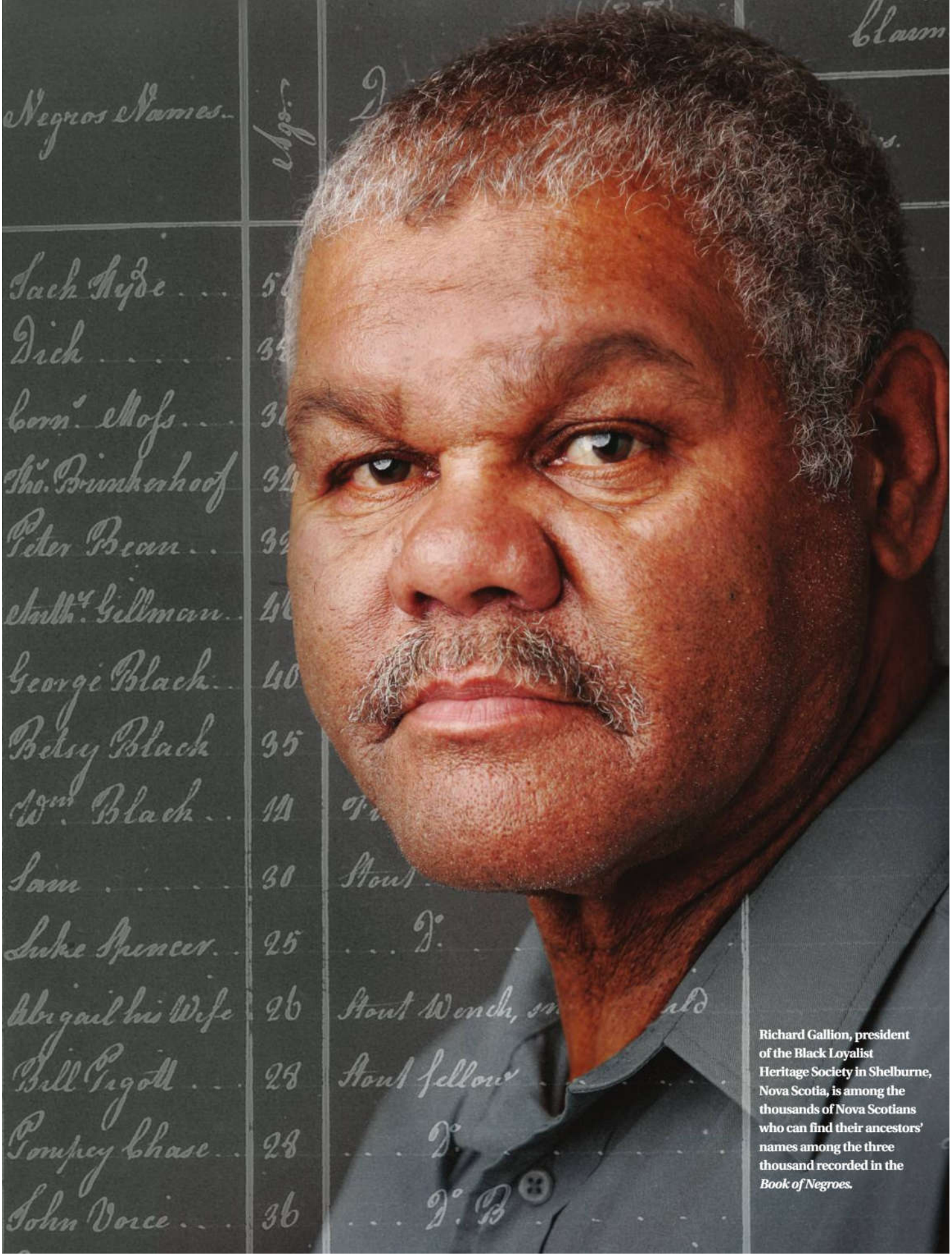
These factors, abetted by bureaucratic inertia, ensured that the Canada Council endured as a fixture of the Canadian cultural scene. Like other federal cultural institutions, it was grandfathered through the 1988 free-trade agreement. The worst threat to it in recent years came from the deficit-fighting Chrétien government's budget cuts, which were reversed only after the 1995 referendum prompted a new appreciation of the council's utility.

Today, the Canada Council is organized into six main divisions: visual arts, media arts, dance, music, theatre, and writing, with cross-cutting provisions to promote aboriginal art, other types of diversity, and interdisciplinary proposals. It also administers a clutch of programs that benefit from its expertise in the arts and letters or its adjudication capabilities. These include the Art Bank, which lends art to government and corporate clients, and the Public Lending Right Commission, which compensates authors for library use of their books. The council is also a publicist for the arts, selflessly promoting public sympathy for its work.

The council receives some 16,000 grant requests per year. They are adjudicated by a panel of subject-area experts – generally artists or arts professionals. In 2003–04, more than 6,000 grants were awarded. It's always a problem identifying the deserving, given that, by virtue of being recognizably worthy of a grant, candidates may already have enough going for them to do without one. Nevertheless, a council grant can provide critical support in the formative stages of a career. It is a badge of status as well as a source of sustenance. On the other hand, it can give false hope to those not destined to make a living in the arts. Surviving on Canada Council grants alone may be possible, but it is no recipe for career stability. Many artists resolve this dilemma by going to work for the council or a related sector of the federal bureaucracy, where the pay is better and they'll end up with a pension. There are many paths to enlightenment.

Institutional artifacts have a quaintness every bit as endearing as great-grandmother's fancywork antimacassar. Although the Canada Council embodies an outdated strategy for national cultural development, it humours a significant interest group that produces much interesting art. The council does some good and little harm for a reasonable amount of money, consistently making a small but significant contribution to a Canadian cultural scene that has grown beyond the Massey Commission's wildest dreams. Even if it didn't, its existence would be justified simply by the novel effect of having something so fuzzy and bohemian snuggled within the Philistine coils of Leviathan.

Paul Litt teaches history and Canadian Studies at Carleton University and has enjoyed handsome federal subsidies for much of his career.



Richard Gallion, president of the Black Loyalist Heritage Society in Shelburne, Nova Scotia, is among the thousands of Nova Scotians who can find their ancestors' names among the three thousand recorded in the *Book of Negroes*.

FREEDOM BOUND

A simple act – having one's name recorded in a ledger known as the *Book of Negroes* – promised freedom to Black Loyalists in 1783 and, for some, allowed passage to Canada. But was Canada the promised land? by Lawrence Hill

It is not easy to find original documents about the history of blacks in Canada. Indeed, many high-school or university students would come back empty-handed if you sent them to the library in search of material about blacks in the eighteenth century. A few enterprising students might unearth newspaper advertisements for runaway slaves. For example, the July 3, 1792, issue of *The Royal Gazette and the Nova Scotia Advertiser* carries a crude sketch of runaway slaves with the advertisement: "Run Away, Joseph Odel and Peter Lawrence (Negroes) from their Masters, and left Digby last evening … Whoever will secure said Negroes so that their Masters may have them again, shall receive TEN DOLLARS Reward, and all reasonable Charges paid. Daniel Odel, Phillip Earl."

SHANNON HENNIGAR

The truly motivated student might dig up one of the memoirs written centuries ago by blacks who had come to Canada. One, for example, would be the *Memoirs of the Life of Boston King, a Black Preacher. Written by Himself*, which begins, like most slave narratives, with the circumstances of his birth: "I was born in the Province of South Carolina, 28 miles from Charlestown. My father was stolen from Africa when he was young …"

But even some of the keenest students might miss a little-known document offering details about the names, ages, places of origin, and personal situations of thousands of blacks who fled American slavery and hoped to find their promised land in Canada.

It is called the *Book of Negroes*.

The handwritten ledger runs to about 150 pages. It offers volumes of information about the lives of black people living more than two centuries ago. On an anecdotal level, it tells us who contracted smallpox, who was blind, and who was travelling with small children. One entry for a woman boarding a ship bound for Nova Scotia describes her as bringing three children, with a

One copy of the *Book of Negroes*, a hand-written, bound list of black passengers leaving New York on British ships in 1783 during the American Revolutionary War, is stored at the Nova Scotia Archives in Halifax.

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM IN BRITAIN

Born in Newfoundland in 1738 where his father served as governor, Sir Henry Clinton was appointed commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America in 1778. His 1779 Philipsburg Proclamation stated that any "Negro who shall desert the Rebel Standard" would receive full protection, freedom, and land.

men, women, and children who travelled – some as free people, and others the slaves or indentured servants of white United Empire Loyalists – in 219 ships sailing from New York between April and November 1783. The *Book of Negroes* did more than capture their names for posterity. In 1783, having your name registered in the document meant the promise of a better life.

As the last British stronghold during the Revolutionary War, Manhattan – where the sacred and the profane mingled so freely that an area teeming with brothels was ironically dubbed "Holy Ground" for its proximity to churches – became a haven for black refugees. Some of the blacks who crowded into the city arrived on their own volition. But others came on the invitation of the British, who twice issued formal proclamations asking blacks to abandon their slave owners and to serve the military forces of King George III.

The first proclamation appeared in November 1775, just months after the Revolutionary War had begun. To attract more support for the British forces, John Murray, the Virginia governor who was formally known as Lord Dunmore, infuriated American slave owners with his famous Dunmore Proclamation:

To the end that peace and good order may the sooner be restored … I do require every person capable of bearing arms to resort to His Majesty's standard … and I do hereby further declare all indented servants, Negroes, or others (appertaining to Rebels) free, that are able and willing to bear arms, they joining His Majesty's Troops, as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing this Colony to a proper sense of their duty to his Majesty's crown and dignity.

Enslaved blacks attentively followed this proclamation, fleeing their owners to serve the British war effort.

The Philipsburg Proclamation came four years later and was designed to attract not just those "capable of bearing arms," but any black person, male or female, who was prepared to serve the British in supporting roles as cooks, laundresses, nurses, and general labourers. Issued in 1779 by Sir Henry Clinton, commander-in-chief of the British forces, it promised: "To every Negro who shall desert the Rebel Standard, full security to follow within these lines, any occupation which he shall think proper."

It is no small irony that Lord Dunmore, who issued the first proclamation, was a slave owner himself. The

The Book of Negroes *did more than capture their registered in the document meant the promise of a*

baby in one arm and a toddler in the other. In this way, the *Book of Negroes* gives precise details about when and where freedom seekers managed to rip themselves free of American slavery. As a research tool it offers historians and genealogists the opportunity to trace and correlate people backward and forward in time in other documents, such as ship manifests, slave ledgers, and census and tax records.

Sadly, however, the *Book of Negroes* has been largely forgotten in Canada. And that is a shame. Dating back to an era when people of African heritage were mostly excluded from official documents and records, the *Book of Negroes* offers an intimate and unsettling portrait of the origins of the Black Loyalists in Canada. Compiled in 1783 by officers of the British military at the tail end of the American Revolutionary War, the *Book of Negroes* was the first massive public record of blacks in North America. Indeed, what makes the *Book of Negroes* so fascinating are the stories of where its people came from and how it came to be that they fled to Nova Scotia and other British colonies.

The document, which is essentially a detailed ledger, contains the names of three thousand black

sad truth is that when a number of former British military officers left New York City at the end of the war, they took with them slaves or indentured servants, all of whom had no choice but to follow the men who claimed to own them as they sailed to areas still under the rule of their king.

Nonetheless, in response to the British promises of security and freedom, many blacks escaped from their owners and lent their skills and their labour to an army that had been weakened by smallpox epidemics and by the daily toll of fighting a war on a foreign continent.

If you want to find examples of blacks joining the British war effort, you would only have to scroll through the *Book of Negroes* to find listings of blacks who had served in a British military regiment called the Black Pioneers. In the ship *La Aigle* [sic], for example, which left New York for Annapolis Royal on October 21, 1783, all forty-four of the black men, women, and children on board are listed as having served with the Black Pioneers. The children appear to have been with their parents as they served behind British lines:

> *Jam Crocker, 50, ordinary fellow, Black Pioneers. Formerly servant to John Ward, Charlestown, South Carolina; left him in 1776.*

> *Molly, 40, ordinary wench, incurable lame of left arm, Black Pioneers. Formerly slave to Mr. Hogwood, Great Bridge near Portsmouth, Virginia; left him in 1779.*

> *Jenny, 9, Black Pioneers. Formerly slave to Mr. Hogwood, Great Bridge near Portsmouth, Virginia; left him in 1779.*

How did it happen that among the thousands of blacks who huddled in Manhattan – many staying in a shantytown of tents and shacks – ended up filling the pages of the *Book of Negroes* and sailing to Nova Scotia in the final months of the war?

Certainly, not all American blacks believed in the British cause during the Revolutionary War. Indeed, many fought for the Americans, and the first person to die in the Revolutionary War was a black rebel from Boston by the name of Crispus Attucks. (He was one of five people killed in the Boston Massacre on March 5, 1770, and has been frequently named as the first martyr for the cause of American independence.) However, the blacks who sided with the British did so in the hope of finding freedom at the end of the war.

By 1782, as it became apparent that the British were losing the war, and as George Washington, commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, prepared to take control of New York City, blacks in Manhattan became increasingly desperate about their prospects. They had been promised freedom in exchange for service in wartime.

But would the British live up to their side of the bargain?

For a time, it looked as though they would not. When the terms of the provisional peace treaty between the losing British and the victorious rebels were finally made known in 1783, the loyal blacks felt betrayed. Article 7 of the peace treaty left the Black Loyalists with the impression that the British had abandoned them entirely. It said:

> *All Hostillities both by Sea and Land shall from henceforth cease all prisoners on both sides shall be set at Liberty and His Britannic Majesty shall with all convenient Speed and without Causing any destruction or carrying away any Negroes or other Property of the American Inhabitants withdraw all its Armies, Garrisons, and Fleets, from the said United States.*

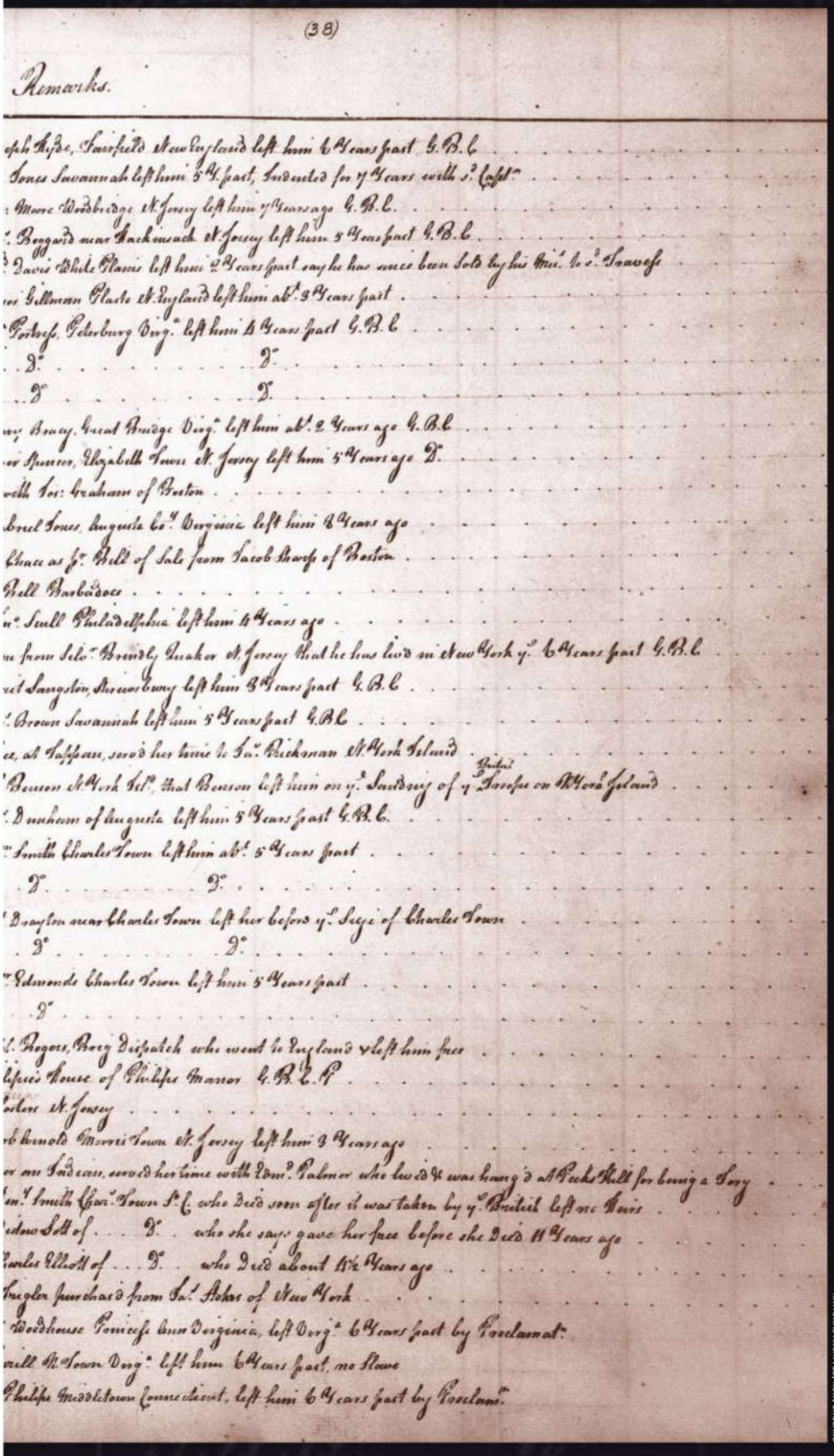
Boston King, a Black Loyalist who fled from his slave owner in South Carolina, served with the British forces in the war, and went on to become a church minister in Nova Scotia and subsequently in Sierra Leone, noted in his memoir the terror that blacks felt when they discovered the terms of the peace treaty:

names for posterity. In 1783, having your name better life.

NOVA SCOTIA ARCHIVES 1979-421-95

Rose Fortune came to Nova Scotia with her family after the American Revolutionary War, likely arriving at Annapolis Royal in June 1784. She earned a living as a "trucker," carrying baggage with a wheelbarrow for passengers travelling on the Saint John–Digby–Annapolis ferry.

Vessels Names and their Commanders	Where Bound	Negros Names	Ages	Description	Claiments. Names	Claiments. Places of Residence	Names of the Persons in whose Possession they now are	
Ship Hope	St Johns River	Jack Hyde	50	Almost past his Labour			John Ketchum	Formerly Slave to Jos
Robt Peacock Mr	"	Dick	33	Stout Fellow			Capt. Peacock	" D° to Jn
Ship Sovereign	St Johns River	Corn. Moss	30	D° likely			Capt. Ed. Ellison	D° to Dan
Wm. Rewan Mr	"	Tho. Brinkerhoff	32	Very short bodied Yellow Man			James Pellew	D° to Jos
"	"	Peter Bean	32	Likely fellow			James Sawyer	D° to Dan
"	"	Chas. Gillman	26	Stout short fellow			Pollard	D° to Ma
"	"	George Black	40	Stout fellow			Jos. Ketchum	D° to Jos
"	"	Betsy Black	35	Ordinary Wench			" D°	D° to
"	"	Wm. Black	12	Sons boy			" D°	D° to
"	"	Sam	30	Stout Fellow			James Sayre	D° to Jos
"	"	Luke Spencer	25	" D°			Dr. Reuens	D° to Blu
"	"	Abigail his Wife	26	Stout Wench, small Child			" D°	Saved her Sons out
"	"	Bill Pigott	23	Stout fellow			Geo: Harding	Formerly Slave to G
"	"	Pompey Chase	23	" D°	Reuben Chase	River St Johns	Reuben Chace	Property of Reuben
"	"	John Dorce	36	" D° B			Capt. Stewart, St Jos	Free born at Punta
"	"	Dean	20	Stout squat W° small Child			Geo: Harding	Formerly Slave to
Ship Queen Elizabeth	Port Roseway	Peter Johnson	25	Stout Fellow			Rbt. Shakespeare	Says he got his free
Benj. Fowler, Mas	"	Judith Johnson	27	Ordinary Wench			" D°	Formerly Slave to Jos
"	"	Thos. Danvers	25	D° Fellow			Archd. Clarke	D° to Th
"	"	Sarah Cross	34	Stout squat Wench W.			" D°	Says she was born
"	"	Davy Spencell	32	Slender Fellow			Rbt. Sherman	Formerly Slave to
"	"	Jn. Dunham	25	" D°			Nath. Hannah	D° to Jos
"	"	Jack Smith	25	" D°			Edwd Hannah	D° to W
"	"	Venus	21	" D° Wench			" D°	D°
"	"	Sam: Drayton	40	Stout Fellow			" D°	D° to Ch
"	"	Nath. Drayton	10	Ordinary Wench			" D°	D°
"	"	Dinah Edmonds	34	" D°			Rbt. Shakespeare	D° to Ch
"	"	Tho. Edmonds	5	small Boy			" D°	D°
"	"	John Rogers	29	Stout fellow			Edwd Gibson	D° to Jos
"	"	Henry Mayfield	33	" D°			Alex. Watson	Free born in St. Pla
"	"	Hannah his Wife	23	Stout Wench 2 small Child			" D°	D° in Jn. Ca
"	"	Bell Browne	24	Stout Fellow			Nich. Brown	Formerly Slave to Jac
"	"	Dinah his Wife	23	Sickly squall W. B small Child			" D°	Born free her Mo
"	"	Tom	10	Sickly Man			Thos. Hartley	Formerly Slave to
"	"	Nancy his Wife	10	Slim Wench			" D°	D° to Th
"	"	Charles	21	Stout B			" D°	D° to
"	"	Prince Bracton	25	D° Cleric Left Eye	Edwd Vaigler	Port Roseway	Edwd Vaigler	Property of Edwd
Ship Montague	Port Roseway	Wm. Westhouse	60	Sall & Worn out			James Rose	Formerly Slave to Wm
Robt Wilson Mas	"	Jenny Powell	45	Stout Wench 1 Child 1 Yr old			" D°	Saved with Capt. Ro
"	"	Benj: Phillips	40	Tall Slim Fellow			Robt Fox	Formerly Servt to Geo



(38)

Remarks.

oseph Ryde, Fairfield New England left him 6 Years past G.B.C.
Jones Savannah left him 5 Y. past, Indented for 7 Years with 3 Lost
Moore Woodbridge N. Jersey left him 7 Years ago G.B.C.
Bogard near Rackinsack N. Jersey left him 5 Years past G.B.C.
Davis Whale Plains left him 2 Years past says he has once been Sold by his Mis. to a Spaniard
Gillman Plaste N. England left him abt. 3 Years past
Portsm. Petersburg Virg.a left him 6 Years past G.B.C.
D.o D.o
D.o D.o
Bracy Great Bridge Virg.a left him abt. 2 Years ago G.B.C.
Spencer, Elizabeth Town N. Jersey left him 5 Years ago D.o
with Jos: Graham of Boston
Jones, Augusta Co.y Virginia left him 8 Years ago
Chace as p.r Bill of Sale from Jacob Sharp of Boston
Bell Barbadoes
Scull Philadelphia left him 4 Years ago
from Silv.r Bridly, Quaker N. Jersey that he has lived in New York y.e 6 Years past G.B.C.
Langston, Sherwsbury left him 3 Years past G.B.C.
Brown Savannah left him 5 Years past G.B.C.
, at Tappan, served her time to Jn.o Packman N. York Island
Benson N. York Isl.d that Benson left him on y.e Sunday of y.e Taking Troops on N. York Island
Dunham of Augusta left him 5 Years past G.B.C.
Smith Charles Town left him abt. 5 Years past
D.o D.o
Drayton near Charles Town left her before y.e Siege of Charles Town
D.o D.o
Edmonds Charles Town left him 5 Years past
D.o
Rogers, Berg Dispatch who went to England & left him free
Lyers House of Phillips Manor G.B.C.P.
Perth N. Jersey
Arnold Morris Town N. Jersey left him 3 Years ago
on Sundean, served her time with Edm.d Palmer who lived & was hang'd at Peeks Kill for being a Tory
Jn.o Smith Char.s Town S.C. who died soon after it was taken by y.e British left no Heirs
Widow Sell of . . D.o . . who she says gave her free before she Died 11 Years ago
Charles Elliott of . . D.o . . who Died about 11½ Years ago
Ziegler purchas'd from Sam.l Baker of New York
Woodhouse Pomfret Town Virginia, left Virg.a 6 Years past by Proclamat.n
Will.m Town Virg.a left him 6 Years past, no Slave
Phillips Middletown Connecticut, left him 6 Years past by Proclam.n

NATIONAL ARCHIVES, KEW, ENGLAND

Inside the *Book of Negroes*

There are British and American versions of the *Book of Negroes*. The British version, left, which appears to be the original, is written in ink in a large ledger of about 156 pages.

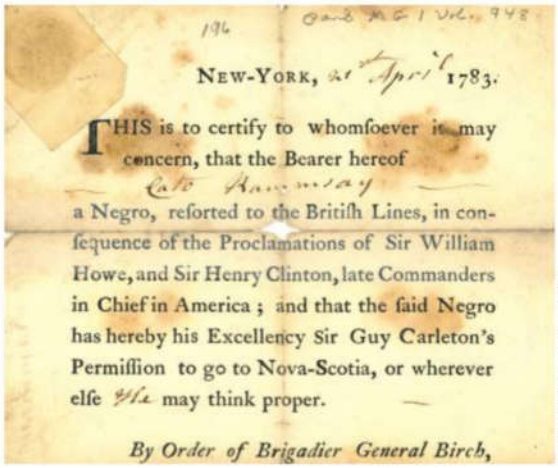
For each person entered in the book, details run horizontally across two facing pages, much like these pages, 37 and 38. There are nine columns for information, but not every person has an entry in every column. The columns include the name of the vessel on which the Black Loyalist is travelling, where it is bound, the passengers' name, age, and description. By modern standards, the descriptions are cruel. "Almost past his labour;" "stout, squat with small child;" and "tall & worn out" are typical entries. There are also columns for the names and place of residence of "Claimants" – a euphemism for slave owners – and for "Names of the Persons in whose possession they are now," people holding blacks as indentured servants. Finally, the second page for each entry contains "Remarks," which provide personal details.

– L.H.

The horrors and devastation of war happily terminated and peace was restored between America and Great Britain, which diffused universal joy among all parties, except us, who had escaped from slavery and taken refuge in the English army; for rumour prevailed at New York, that all the slaves, in number 2,000, were to be delivered up to their masters, altho' some of them had been three or four years among the English.

This dreadful rumour filled us all with inexpressible anguish and terror, especially when we saw our old masters coming from Virginia, North Carolina, and other parts, and seizing upon their slaves in the streets of New York, or even dragging them out of their beds. Many of the slaves had very cruel masters, so that the thoughts of returning home with them embittered life to us. For some days we lost our appetite for food, and sleep departed from our eyes.

In the end, Boston King and his wife, Violet, and three thousand other Black Loyalists did manage to get their names registered in the *Book of Negroes*, a necessary prerequisite to obtaining permission to sail to Nova Scotia.



NEW-YORK, 1st April 1783.

THIS is to certify to whomſoever it may concern, that the Bearer hereof Cato Ramsay a Negro, reſorted to the Britiſh Lines, in conſequence of the Proclamations of Sir William Howe, and Sir Henry Clinton, late Commanders in Chief in America; and that the ſaid Negro has hereby his Excellency Sir Guy Carleton's Permiſſion to go to Nova-Scotia, or wherever elſe he may think proper.

By Order of Brigadier General Birch,

NOVA SCOTIA ARCHIVES/GORDON WHITE FAMILY

This passport belonged to Cato Ramsay, allowing him to immigrate to Nova Scotia. Some black refugees without passports would be turned away and made to return to their place of origin – to a life of slavery. We see here that Ramsay gained his freedom by escaping to the British lines, which would have been a risky venture.

To a certain degree, they owed this opportunity to the stubborn loyalty of Sir Guy Carleton, British commander-in-chief in the final days of the war. As historian James W. St. G. Walker at the University of Waterloo has noted, Carleton interpreted the peace treaty to mean that blacks who had served the redcoats for a year were technically free, thus they could not be considered "property" of the Americans. They were free to leave with the British.

Much to the consternation of George Washington, Carleton ordered his officers to inspect all blacks who wished to leave New York and, most importantly, to register those who could prove their service to the British in the *Book of Negroes*. Carleton told Washington that the British would keep a record of the blacks being removed from New York, and he kept his promise with the meticulously detailed ledger.

The document gives not only the name and age of every black person who sailed from New York under British protection, but, for the most part, it also gives a description of each person, information about how he or she escaped, his or her military record, names of former slave masters, and the names of white masters in cases where the blacks remained enslaved or indentured.

Following is a small sample of passengers listed on July 31, 1783, on the ship *L'Abondance* heading for Port Roseway (Shelburne), Nova Scotia ("GBC" stands for Brigadier General Samuel Birch's Certificate, which was proof of service to the British military during the American Revolutionary War).

John Green, 35, stout fellow. Formerly the property of Ralph Faulker of Petersburgh, Virginia; left him four years ago. GBC.

David Shepherd, 15, likely boy. Formerly the property of William Shepherd, Nancy Mun Virginia; left him four years ago. GBC.

Rose Bond, 21, stout wench. Formerly the property of Andrew Steward of Crane Island, Virginia; left him four years ago. GBC.

Dick Bond, 18 months, likely child. Daughter to Rose Bond & born within the British Lines. GBC.

The *Book of Negroes* also gives the name of the ship on which they sailed, its destination, and its date of departure:

We did carefully inspect the aforegoing Vessels on 31st July 1783 and … on board the said Vessels we found the negroes mentioned in the aforegoing List amounting to One hundred and Forty four Men, One hundred and Thirteen Women and ninety Two Children and … we furnished each master of a Vessel with a Certified List of the Negroes on Board the Vessel and informed him that he would not be permitted to Land in Nova Scotia any other Negroes than those contained in the List and that if any other Negroes were found on board the Vessel he would be severely punished …

To qualify for departure by ship to a safe haven well away from the thirteen colonies and the new country they were about to establish, blacks had to prove that they had served behind British lines for at least one year. Many obtained certificates demonstrating their service to the British. But many others who had no such certificates were entered into the *Book of Negroes* and allowed to sail.

In the end, while frustrated American army officers looked on, 1,336 men, 914 women, and 750 children embarked on more than two hundred vessels waiting to spirit them out of the New York Harbour. Some of the Black Loyalists went to Quebec, England, or Germany, but most travelled to Nova Scotia, establishing communities that exist to this day in places such as Shelburne, Annapolis Royal, Digby, Sydney, and Halifax and its nearby areas.

The (Legislative) End of the Trade in Slaves

Passed 200 years ago, the Slave Trade Act was officially titled, "An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade." The act rid the slave trade in the British Empire, which had begun about 250 years earlier, during the reign of Elizabeth I. A group opposing the slave trade, consisting of Evangelical Protestants and Quakers, rallied behind the Slave Trade Act. The Quakers had long viewed slavery as immoral. The anti-slave-trade groups had considerable numbers of sympathizers in the English Parliament by 1807. Nicknamed the "saints," this alliance was led by parliamentarian William Wilberforce, the most vocal and dedicated of the campaigners. Wilberforce and Charles Fox led the campaign in the House of Commons, whereas Lord Grenville was left to persuade the House of Lords.

Grenville made a passionate speech arguing that the slave trade was "contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sound policy" and criticized fellow members for not abolishing it. They put it to a vote. The act was passed in the House of Lords by 41 votes to 20 and it was carried in the House of Commons by 114 to 15, to become law on March 25, 1807. But it would take another twenty-five years before slavery itself became illegal – when parliament passed the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833.

The British soon set their sights on convincing other nations to end the slave trade, if only to eliminate a foreseeable economic and competitive disadvantage they would be placed in. The British campaign was a large-scale foreign-policy effort. It would take decades to convince some nations to abandon the slave trade. Denmark and the United States banned the trade much later, around 1850. Some small trading nations, such as Sweden and Holland, which had little to lose, responded much earlier.

After the Slave Trade Act was passed in 1807, British captains caught transporting slaves were fined £100 for every individual found on board. Still, the slave trade continued, more deviously than ever. Slave ships in danger of being captured by the British navy would throw many of their illegal passengers overboard to minimize the £100 fine per individual.

Although many Nova Scotians can still trace their heritage to the Black Loyalists, the blacks who arrived in 1783 did not meet with a fairytale ending. Some never received the land they had been promised in exchange for serving the British during the war, but worse, many were subjected to cruel treatment in the province – confronting a segregated society, the ropes of hangmen, and the first race riot in North America (when disbanded white soldiers drove blacks out of their homes in Birchtown, near Shelburne, in order to secure employment for themselves).

Understandably, more than one thousand Black Loyalists elected to migrate again, just a decade later. Embarking in a flotilla of fifteen ships in the Halifax harbour, they commenced the first "back to Africa" exodus in the history of the Americas, literally navigating past slave vessels as they sailed east across the Atlantic Ocean to found a new colony in Sierra Leone. That voyage, too, was thoroughly documented. But that is another story.

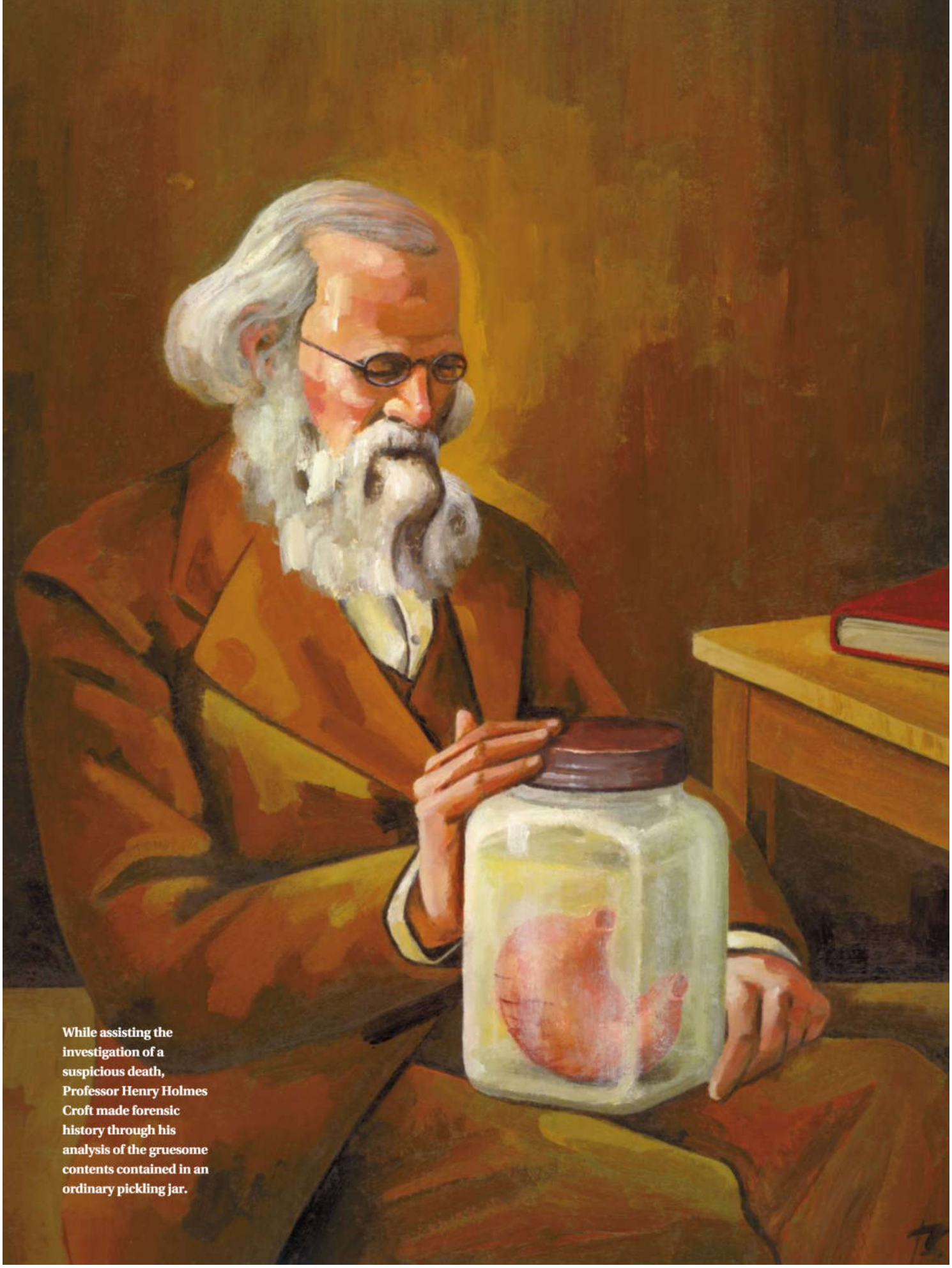
The *Book of Negroes* is a national treasure and deserves to be considered as such. The Nova Scotia Archives, the Nova Scotia Museum, the Public Archives of Canada, and the Black Loyalist Heritage Society have all helped document the *Book of Negroes*. Like any great historical document, it offers far too much information to be absorbed in a single sitting. It offers repeated glimpses of the difficult relationship between Great Britain and the nascent United States, and manages to both reinforce and shatter the romantic notion that Canada was a promised land for fugitive American slaves. Many of the people listed in the book travelled "on their own bottom" and free, assuming that their newfound liberty would be protected in Canada. On the other hand, a substantial number of the blacks listed in the *Book of Negroes* came to this country as the property – slaves or indentured servants – of white United Empire Loyalists. For them, Canada would be a new place to test the chains of human bondage.

Lawrence Hill lives in Burlington, Ontario. His new novel, *The Book of Negroes*, has just been released by HarperCollins Canada. For more information, see ‹www.lawrencehill.com›.

Et Cetera

The *Book of Negroes* can be found in the Nova Scotia Public Archives, the National Archives of the United States, and in the National Archives (Public Records Office) in Kew, England. It can also be found on microfilm at the National Archives of Canada, and accessed electronically through Library and Archives Canada, by visiting: ‹epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/ic/can_digital_collections/blackloyalists›.

In *The Beaver*: "In Bondage" by Tom Derreck. February/March 2003. Black slavery arrived in Canada in 1628 aboard a privateer's ship. It would not be abolished for more than two centuries. "Jim Henson's Journey" by Peter Meyler. April/May 1998. Examines Jim Henson's journey from slavery to freedom. "The Varieties of Black Experience" by Christopher Moore. June/July 2002. By the 1850s, blacks were a more rooted, permanent, and diverse part of the Canadian population than the fugitive slave narratives might suggest. Back issues available at TheBeaver.ca.



While assisting the investigation of a suspicious death, Professor Henry Holmes Croft made forensic history through his analysis of the gruesome contents contained in an ordinary pickling jar.

Fine Chemistry

Arsenic and no trace. But that all changed when forensic chemist Henry Holmes Croft made Canadian legal history with a pickling jar's gruesome contents. by Paul Dalby

The train from Montreal rumbled to a halt in a billowing cloud of steam at the Grand Trunk Railroad's station in Toronto on a cold, blustery, November day in 1858. Back in the train's baggage car, conductor James Keeble took a key from his waistcoat pocket and unlocked the cupboard reserved for bonded goods. From the top shelf he removed a small box containing a pickling jar, sealed with wax.

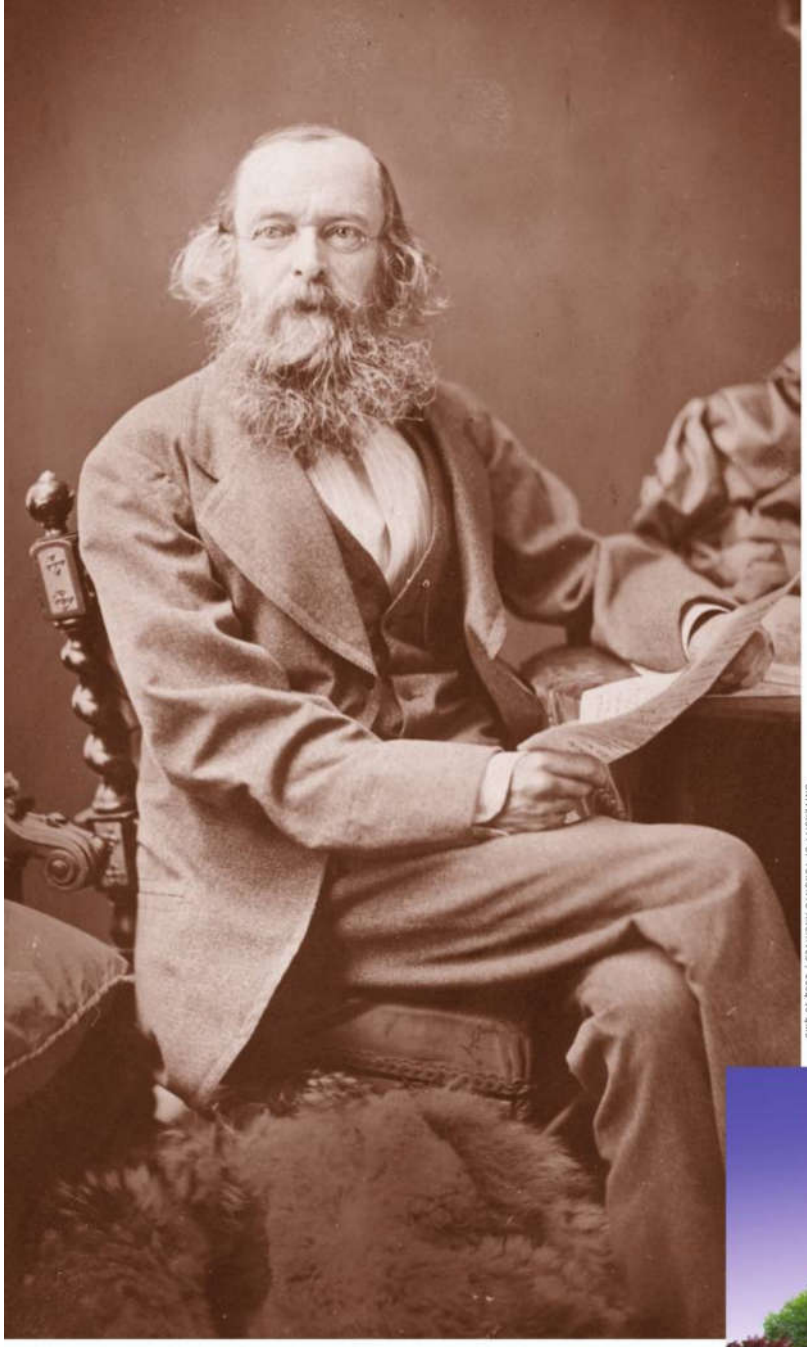
Keeble knew the jar contained a human stomach, which had previously resided inside the body of Sarah King, a doctor's wife who had died under very suspicious circumstances. But the railway conductor had no idea that this grisly package would make criminal history in Canada. All he remembered was the precise instructions he was given from Simon Davidson, the coroner in Brighton, 135 kilometres east of Toronto.

"Mr. Davidson told me not to let [the package] out of my custody until such time as I placed it in the hands of Professor Croft," Keeble would testify later in court. True to his word, Keeble walked briskly along the plank sidewalks of the bustling city streets, carrying the package directly to the chemistry department at the University of Toronto, where he delivered it to Professor Henry Holmes Croft.

A short, wiry man with long, unruly hair and a Rasputin beard, Croft looked a bit the mad professor – which in some ways he was. Henry Croft's talents as a chemist were already well established before he turned his attention to simplifying and improving the methods for detecting poisons. Just one year earlier, in 1857, Croft had gained notoriety when he succeeded in making oil safe to use in household lamps by deodorizing the high sulphur content of oil drawn from a well near Sarnia, Ontario.

But even the brilliant chemist could not have predicted that the contents of that pickling jar would take his name into the history books as Canada's first forensic detective. Author John King wrote in his 1914 article, "McCaul, Croft, Forneri: Personalities of Early University Days," that "Croft in his time saved some innocent men from the gallows, and it is just as

JEAN-MARIE BENOIT



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO ARCHIVES / 2004-16-4MS

A true Renaissance man, Henry Holmes Croft's interests extended beyond the sciences. He was an accomplished pianist and a member of the Philharmonic Society, among other organizations.

certain he was instrumental in bringing to justice others of whom society was well rid of."

Professor Henry Croft, born March 6, 1820, was a man shaped by the mercurial nineteenth century, his life touched by famous scientist Michael Faraday, Napoleon Bonaparte, Charles Dickens, the Fenians, and Wyatt Earp. Croft's foray into the uncharted waters of forensic science was, for him, a natural choice. He was a maverick all his life.

As a young boy growing up in London, England, Croft had built and blown up his own chemistry lab several times before he was sent for a conventional education at an academy called Tavistock House. (After Croft graduated, Charles Dickens purchased the house, which is where he wrote *Bleak House, Hard Times* and *A Tale of Two Cities.*) The teenage Croft showed little interest in following his father, William Croft, into the British civil service. An exasperated Croft senior sought the advice of his close friend Michael Faraday, who had already attained fame as the inventor of the electric motor. Croft considered his son a "wayward potterer in acids and stinks," but Faraday knew talent when he saw it.

"Your son certainly has a wonderful aptitude for chemistry," he told the concerned father. "Send him to Germany by all means and send him there at once." So, in 1838, Henry Holmes Croft was shipped off to the University of Berlin to study under the noted professor Eilhard Mitscherlich, a former friend of Napoleon Bonaparte. Under Mitscherlich's influence, the eighteen-year-old Croft became fascinated not only with chemistry, but also with botany, zoology, and mineralogy. His proclivity for broadening his mind did not seem to extend to the tedious business of sitting exams, and Croft left the university without bothering to take his Ph.D. – even though he had headed a class that produced many famous scientists.

Before returning to England, Croft received one solid job offer in Germany. As a talented pianist, he often performed recitals for the king of Hanover, but he declined the king's offer of a full-time job as his court musician.

Once back in England, Croft was quickly flagged by powerful people such as Faraday as "one to watch," so it came as no surprise when the new governor general of Canada, Sir Charles Bagot, approached him with a plum job offer. And, six months later, Croft travelled to Canada to become the first professor of chemistry and experimental philosophy at the University of King's College (later renamed the University of Toronto). Croft had just celebrated his twenty-third birthday.

SANDRA ALEXANDER

Built in 1856, the "Croft Chapter House," named after the venerated professor who used it as his chemistry laboratory at the University of King's College (today's University of Toronto), is a unique round structure that still stands today.

His induction ceremony at the new college on June 8, 1843, struck a note of pure theatre. In front of the

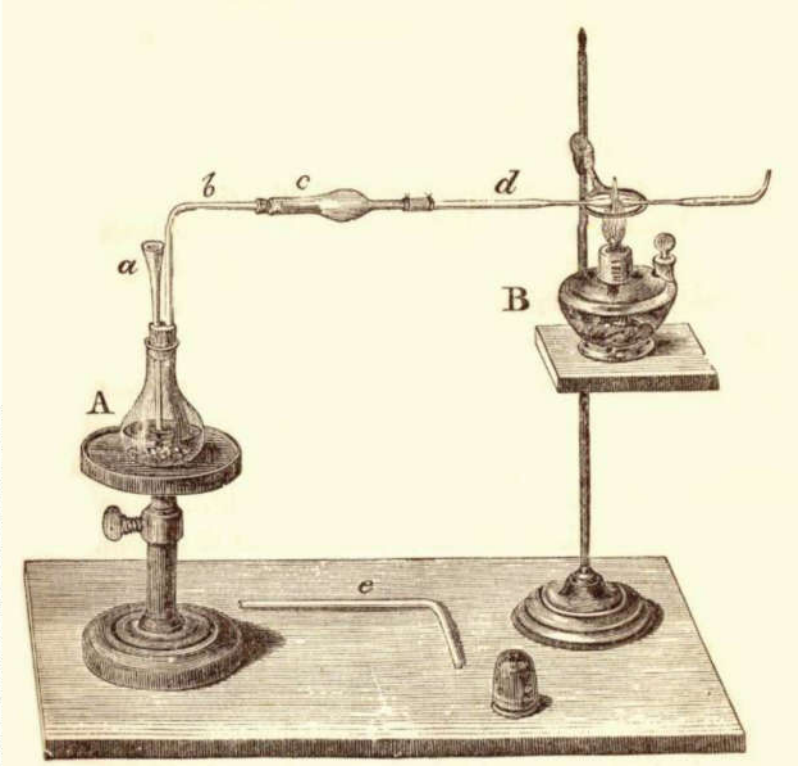
entire student body, Henry Croft, in his usual brilliant style, was demonstrating the ignition point of potassium in contact with water. A fragment of burning metal exploded through the air and set fire to the gown of the bishop of Toronto, Dr. John Strachan, who was also the college president. The fire was safely extinguished, which is more than can be said for the animosity that ignited between the two men. Later, Henry Croft became the champion of the movement to remove King's College from the church's control and turn it into a non-sectarian university. Six years after that, when government legislation made the transition official, Bishop Strachan was ousted and Croft was elected vice-chancellor of the new University of Toronto – but only after he was given an honorary degree.

In four decades at the University of Toronto, Henry Holmes Croft achieved iconic status and attracted a level of hero worship from his students. One of Croft's students, Hodgson Ellis, who succeeded him as professor of chemistry at the University of Toronto, wrote in a 1901 tribute: "He inspired in those students who were privileged to work with him not only respect for the master and enthusiasm for the work, but also and chiefly, love for the man. He was full of dry humor, thinking strongly and speaking fearlessly, but brimming over with kindness."

Croft was recognized as one of the new breed of scientists eager to throw out the old scientific methods and try new tests and approaches. One such test he employed could detect the most elusive poison of that period, arsenic. Also known as the "inheritance powder," arsenic had been used for centuries by impatient relatives eager to dispose of an aging patriarch. Like many poisons, arsenic could mimic common maladies, tricking physicians into believing a victim had died of natural causes. Symptoms of constant vomiting, diarrhea, headaches, even convulsions, were routinely ascribed to gastric flu.

In the 1850s, toxicology was a crude discipline, not far removed from black magic, and doing very little to shed light on so many unexplained deaths. Napoleon's poisoning by arsenic would not be uncovered by science until 170 years after his death. The accepted test for arsenic, devised by European toxicologist Dr. Hermann Boerhaave, involved placing substances suspected of containing the poison on red-hot coals and "sniffing" out any strange odours. The test was so prone to failure that few judges and lawyers would prosecute a poisoning case. Forensic evidence was not trusted, much less accepted, in the court of law.

Over the next thirty years, Professor Henry Croft would challenge that skepticism through his relentless pursuit of scientific integrity, changing the landscape of the criminal justice system. Croft became the most sought-after forensic detective in Canada, serving as the expert witness at dozens of murder trials. He undoubtedly paved the way for specialized forensic science laboratories such as the first North American lab, founded in Montreal (see page 35).



NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE, MARSH TEST APPARATUS, STEEL ENGRAVING, 1867

Apparatus for the Application of Marsh's Test.

In 1858, Croft was a strong proponent of the work of brilliant English chemist James Marsh, who had developed the Marsh test for arsenic while working as assistant to Michael Faraday at the Royal Military Academy in Greenwich, London. As an eighteen-year-old "boy genius," Croft had met Marsh on his many visits to Faraday's labs. Later, in Canada, Croft was clearly the right man at the right time to adopt the Marsh test, a test that could be used to detect minute amounts of arsenic in foods or in the human stomach. The Marsh test spelled the end of the age of arsenic poisoners.

The Marsh test was a highly sensitive method used to detect arsenic. Developed by chemist James Marsh, trace amounts of arsenic – as little as 0.02 mg – would form a silvery-black deposit.

In the test, a sample was placed in a flask with arsenic-free zinc and sulfuric acid. Arsine gas (also hydrogen) formed and was led through a drying tube to a glass tube in which it was heated. The arsenic was deposited as a "mirror" just beyond the heated area and on any cold surface held to the burning gas emanating from the jet.

This new science enabled Henry Croft to unravel the mysterious death of twenty-five-year-old Sarah King, a robust and healthy young woman from Brighton, who was in early pregnancy and suddenly fell into chronic ill-health. While her death was suspicious, scientists at Queen's University in Kingston refused to examine her stomach for signs of poisoning, claiming they were too busy and turning the gruesome jar away when it arrived at their lab. Henry Croft was the last hope for solving her death.

According to her husband, Dr. William King, Sarah had become ill after falling from her carriage. Later, when she complained of stomach cramps, Dr. King treated her for *cholera morbus* (acute gastroenteritis) with "small doses of a white powder."

Mrs. King wretched violently after each dose and her condition worsened.

As dawn broke on November 4, 1858, Sarah King slipped into a coma and died. Her seemingly distraught husband moved quickly to have her buried on the family's land. Mrs. King's parents were openly suspicious about her death. In a small town such as Brighton, gossip travels faster than a pandemic, and they had already heard rumours that Dr. King had been having an affair with a beautiful twenty-year-old woman named Melinda Vandervoort. Regrettably, it was the young doctor's wife who introduced the two. After their first meeting, Melinda waited only a few days before sending Dr. King a photograph of herself and a steamy letter that read: "My heart flutters at the thought of you. Poor, little helpless me, you have an alarming influence over my girlish innocence."

A smitten Dr. King promptly wrote back, asking his "sweet little lump of good nature" if she could save herself from the marriage altar for just one year. These incriminating love letters were not found until long after Sarah King's death, so initially, her parents had little solid proof of any wrongdoing. Yet they pressed for an inquest. The dead woman's body was exhumed from its grave and taken to a nearby schoolhouse where two local doctors, using an old door as an operating table, removed her stomach and prepared it for its long rail journey.

In Toronto, Professor Croft worked with his trademark diligence and efficiency inside his custom-built laboratory, a rotunda with a high, vented conical roof copied from England's famous Glastonbury Abbey. Its design allowed chemical vapours and the odour from over-ripe specimens to escape. "The stomach was emptied into a glass of water," Croft said later of his meticulous testing. "The liquid was allowed to settle, the upper part was poured off and a sediment left. This sediment was found to contain arsenic. I next examined the coats of the stomach and found more arsenic in them," Croft reported. "The quantity I found in the stomach was eleven grains." Croft knew that this amount of arsenic was five times the amount needed to kill someone. These early findings fuelled speculation that Dr. King had poisoned his wife with arsenic.

The doctor always had supplies of arsenic on hand for his homeopathic treatments, but he later insisted that he had only given his wife minute doses as a treatment for her *cholera morbus*. Professor Croft was completely focused on solid scientific evidence, not conjecture, so after finding the arsenic in Mrs. King's stomach, he asked Brighton coroner Simon Davidson to send along her liver and kidneys. Croft wanted to rule out any chance that the stomach might have absorbed arsenic naturally when it was displayed earlier to a coroner's jury.

For a second time, Mrs. King's body was exhumed and local doctors removed the organs, shipping them in yet another glass jar aboard a train to Toronto.

For a second time, Mrs. King's body was exhumed and local doctors removed the organs, shipping them in yet another glass jar aboard a train to Toronto. Croft's second tests showed only moderate traces of arsenic in Mrs. King's liver, where there should have been a considerable residue if arsenic poisoning was the true cause of death.

However, Dr. William King did not wait around to be cleared by Croft's findings; he fled Brighton on horseback across the U.S. border to meet up with his girlfriend, Melinda Vandervoort. His swift departure was grounds for an arrest warrant to be issued. Dr. King was cornered by lawmen in New York state and then brought back to jail in nearby Cobourg, Ontario. Dr. King's trial commenced on April 4, 1859, and his defence lawyer, John H. Cameron, brought forward several witnesses to support the claim that Sarah King was not poisoned by arsenic.

The most dramatic moment of the trial came when Professor Henry Croft took the stand. He shocked the court with his testimony that arsenic was not the cause of death, citing that he had found

STALKING CSI

1775
Swedish chemist Carl Wilhelm Scheele discovers a method of detecting large doses of arsenic in a murder victim's corpse.

1823
Thesis on nine patterns found in fingerprints published by University of Breslau professor John Evangelist Purkinji.

1868
Creation of the first science laboratory dedicated to fighting crime, the *Institut de médecine légale de Paris*.

1878
Dr. William Hodgeson Ellis testifies at a rape murder case using bloodstain pattern analysis.

very little arsenic in the liver. "Arsenic cannot be put into the liver after death, it must have been taken in during life, that is the reason I wrote for the liver," Croft testified at the trial. "I did not determine the quantity of arsenic found in the liver. But it was very little, not sufficient to cause death."

It was typical of the low credence accorded to science in the mid-nineteenth century that the jury completely ignored Croft's testimony. After deliberating for nineteen hours, they found Dr. King guilty of poisoning his wife with arsenic, but recommended mercy. The trial judge saw no reason for such maudlin sentiment and promptly sentenced Dr. William King to hang.

Just before he walked to the gallows on June 9, 1859, Dr. King finally confessed to his wife's murder. In an open letter dictated to his jailer and published by the *Globe* newspaper, he revealed that he had, in fact, used an injection of morphine, not arsenic, to dispatch her.

The King trial marked the first time forensic evidence was introduced into a Canadian court of law. As it turned out, Henry Croft was proved correct in his evidence by a most unexpected source. It was the last time his word was ever doubted by a court of law. The doctor had received the right verdict – but for the wrong reasons. In the end, it made little difference to the tall, handsome offender as he met his maker in front of a crowd of ten thousand spectators. The executioner from Toronto, wearing a black mask, placed the noose around his neck and jerked open the trap door beneath his feet.

Professor Hodgson Ellis said of Henry Croft: "In this branch of his profession [forensic chemistry], he was unsurpassed. His clear intelligence, his wide knowledge, his careful attention to details and his absolute devotion to truth were shown equally in the laboratory and the witness box."

In the years after the King trial, Henry Croft became a familiar figure around Toronto, puffing away on his ever-present Meerschaum pipe. He was known to take his students on long botany walks in the countryside around Toronto, gathering up wildflower roots for his garden along the way. But Croft also sent those same students on long marches into battle.

Faced with the threat of war from the United States, Croft organized the University Rifle Corps and took the rank of captain. The students' militia received its baptism of fire in a battle with Fenian sympathizers crossing the border at Niagara on June 2, 1866. Three students died, many were wounded, and Croft, ordered by the government to stay behind in Toronto for his own safety, was devastated by these heavy losses.

Henry Croft's own world came crashing down in 1879, when he and his wife, Mary, lost three of their seven children to illness in quick succession. Croft's health was so shattered by this tragic turn of events that he had little strength left for teaching. After a distinguished career in academia, he suffered a complete breakdown and was forced to take early retirement from the university.

Rather than retiring to his home country of England, Croft chose to move his family to a warm, dry climate for their health. He chose the wild frontier country near San Diego, Texas, where bandit raids across the Mexican border were a common occurrence and his neighbour was the legendary gunfighter and lawman Wyatt Earp.

After only four years on his Las Herminitas Ranch, Henry Holmes Croft died of natural causes. His obituary in the Texas newspapers described him in spartan prose as simply "an English chemist." Henry Croft left behind very little in the way of written documents about his scientific exploits. Today, in Toronto, his old rotunda laboratory still stands, now known as Croft Chapter House. There are no beakers or test tubes inside, no "acids and stinks," just tables and chairs used for meetings.

Yet Henry Holmes Croft's legacy is more enduring than bricks and mortar – his groundbreaking work in forensic science as Canada's first lab detective has made him an enduring hero in the world of chemistry. It surely qualifies him as the grandfather of television's C.S.I. heroes, who walk in his footsteps more than a century later.

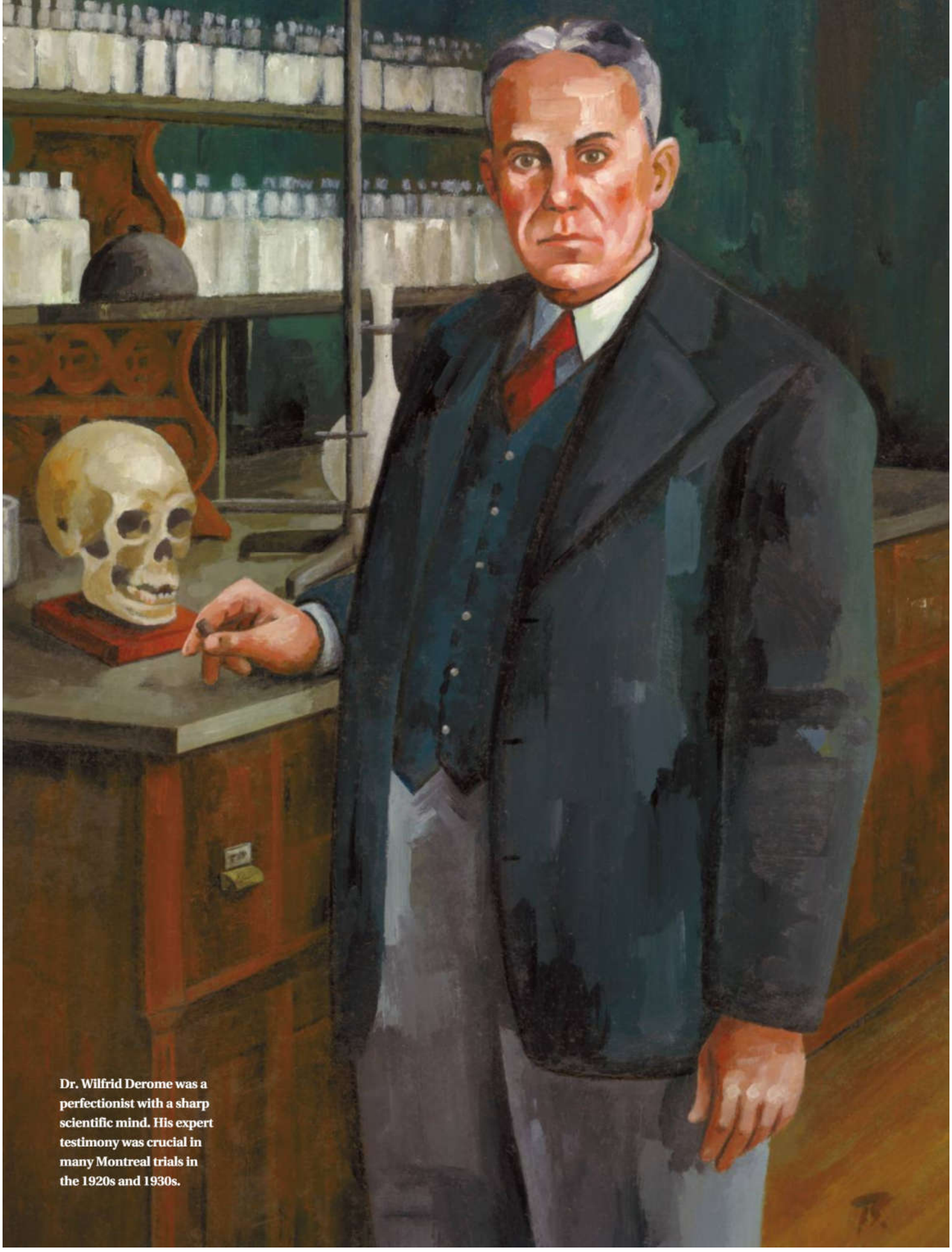
An award-winning filmmaker and writer, Paul Dalby produced the "Historylands" series for History Television. He first heard about the William King trial while filming his latest documentary, "Fighting Words," a biography of newspaper baron Joseph E. Atkinson. Some old-fashioned detective work and the help of three great local librarians led him to Henry Holmes Croft, Canada's first forensic detective.

1882
French criminologist Alphonse Bertillon starts using photographs and body measurements to identify criminals.

1887
Publication of *A Study in Scarlet*, the first Sherlock Holmes mystery by Author Conan Doyle.

1890
Alphonse Bertillon discovers that each individual fingerprint has unique characteristics. Fingerprinting quickly gains recognition.

1892
Fingerprints first used to prove guilt when Argentine police officer Juan Vucetich proves guilt of murderer Francisca Roja.



Dr. Wilfrid Derome was a perfectionist with a sharp scientific mind. His expert testimony was crucial in many Montreal trials in the 1920s and 1930s.

Rigorous Science

A priest suspected of murder. A scientist who can solve the puzzle using ballistics evidence – precise proof never before used in a Canadian court. This would be no ordinary murder trial. by Heather Wright

Dr. Wilfrid Derome focused on nothing else in his cramped Montreal laboratory except the work in front of him. On the table were two Bayard pistols – a Browning and a Mauser – and the .25-calibre bullets that detective Georges Farah-Lajoie had fired from them. Beside them were the bullets Derome had removed from the skull of Raoul Delorme, whose body had been found on a freezing January morning in 1922 near a municipal equipment shed. Patiently, Derome rolled each bullet on carbon paper and then rolled the carbon-covered bullets onto a blank page. The striations left on the bullets from the pistols' barrels left distinct patterns in the stripes on the paper. He labelled each bullet's inky track and noted from which gun it had been fired. He photographed the bullets' trails and enlarged the images for closer examination.

Derome found the match he had been expecting. He and detective Farah-Lajoie agreed that this evidence, combined with evidence they had previously gathered, was sufficient to bring a conviction against the accused. Their next step was to convince the courts.

This would be no ordinary murder trial, for in 1922 Quebec, it was a particularly politically charged case. The accused was a priest, Reverend Adélard Delorme, charged with murdering his own half-brother. Called as an expert witness, Dr. Wilfrid Derome was preparing ballistics evidence that would be the first such evidence ever presented at a North American trial.

JEAN MARIE BENOIT

When it comes to television's portrayal of the aftermath of heinous crimes, it seems that viewers want to know all the gory details. Popular television programs such as *CSI, Forensic Files,* and *Bones,* reflect today's intense interest in the world of forensic science. These programs owe a great debt to Canada, as the first North American forensics laboratory was founded in Montreal in 1914. It served as the model for many such laboratories in the United States, including that of the FBI. The Montreal lab was the result of one man's belief that medical experts and scientists should play an essential role in the service of justice. That man was Dr. Wilfrid Derome.

In the early 1900s, Derome could look out his window in Montreal's Notre-Dame Hospital *Laboratoire de pathologie et d'histologie* and see across the street to the courthouse. As the director of the lab, he had made the short walk between these two buildings many times when he was called as an expert witness in criminal cases. Derome enjoyed this work; it appealed to his natural precision and curiosity and to his desire to see justice served.

But Derome was also a perfectionist. He knew that he needed more training and, in 1908, his request to the

MUSÉE DE LA CIVILISATION, QUÉBEC

Dr. Wilfrid Derome in 1915, during his first year of operating the *Laboratoire de recherches médico-légales* at 179 Craig Street East.

administrators of Notre-Dame Hospital for further studies in Paris was granted. They were influenced by his former professor, Dr. Georges Villeneuve, who supported the study of forensics and the necessity for doctors to have the kind of expertise required to support the justice system. Derome studied at the University of Paris – one of only two scientific institutions in the world that specialized in solving crimes through the use of science and medicine. Derome studied with the world's experts in forensic medicine and criminology, including Victor Balthazard and Alphonse Bertillon. Edmund Locard, another famous French doctor of forensic medicine, created the first school at Lyon specializing in forensic science. Derome followed Locard's work throughout his career.

Derome returned to Montreal two years later with his diploma in legal medicine and the expertise he needed in such fields as ballistics, criminal psychology, and fingerprint analysis. He also came back with a dream and the determination to see it fulfilled, believing that the law would be served best if scientists dedicated to the study and analysis of crime-related material were able to work together in one place, sharing knowledge and resources. They needed equipment and modern techniques to analyze evidence and to make accurate statements in court. With the support of the legal and medical community, Derome lobbied the Quebec government for just such an institution.

In his award-winning book, published in 2003, *Wilfrid Derome, expert en homicides*, Jacques Côté describes a conversation in July 1911 between Derome and Sir Lomer Gouin, attorney general and premier of Quebec. Gouin told Derome that he had taken his request for a research institution very seriously. Derome reminded the premier that in the great cities of Europe, such labs had proven to be very useful, reiterating the point that even London, the home of Sherlock Holmes, did not have such a lab. He must have been very convincing. The premier complimented Derome on his ability to put forward a case and asked if he would consider entering politics. To this, Derome replied that he preferred the company of his cadavers: "Ils ne me reclament rien." (They never complain.) Derome's droll sense of humour was well known by his students, family, co-workers, and his colleagues.

In early 1914, Sir Lomer Gouin announced the establishment of the *Laboratoire de recherches médico-légales* and made Dr. Derome the director. The location of the lab was inauspicious, as it was situated above the city morgue at 179 Craig Street East, a building that also housed the landlord. The terms of the lease dictated that Derome's employees never use the main entrance, as it would disturb the clients of the landlord's funeral parlour.

STALKING CSI

1908
Canada sanctions the use of fingerprints as a means of identification.

1910
Creation of the world's second forensic science laboratory in Lyon, France, headed by Edmond Locard.

1911
First set of fingerprints identified by the RCMP Fingerprint Bureau headed by Edward Foster, the "Father of Canadian Fingerprinting."

1914
Sir Lomer Gouin, attorney general and premier of Quebec, creates the first forensic lab in North America. It opens in Montreal.

In September 1915, Derome began his mission to regularize the gathering of specimens and evidence by the province's coroners in cases of sudden death. In a series of memos, he listed the specimens that needed to be collected for examining different crimes, such as rape or poisoning, and what should be sent to the lab. As much as Derome wanted the lab to be recognized as a central resource for police, coroners, and justice officials in the province, the trust and collaboration that was necessary to make this happen took time to develop.

For instance, after Derome had given expert evidence regarding bloodstains on a suspect's clothing – a man accused of brutally murdering a young woman – the man was acquitted. The defence attorney argued that the local doctor had not found evidence of blood, questioning why Derome, a government-paid expert, had found blood – implying that the expert was biased to the prosecution's case. He also argued that scientific methods continually change, so the investigative tools used by Derome could be outdated in the future, which meant they were fallible. Derome was furious, but the case was a lesson in what he had yet to overcome. He determined to make the new lab a trusted link in the service of justice.

He did so by building up his forensics team. In 1920, Derome employed a newly graduated chemist and pharmacologist, Franchère Pépin. Derome added a chemistry and toxicology unit to the lab so Pépin would be able to work on several projects, including identifying and tabulating quantities of alcohol in the blood. This new branch of the lab was another first in North American forensic lab development.

In June 1920, Derome petitioned to add another key member to his forensics team – a photographer. He wrote directly to Sir Lomer Gouin and argued the need for crime scene photographs to show the jury the condition of the corpse, such as its relative position to its surroundings, along with other pieces of evidence used in court. Unfortunately, the particular photographer Derome proposed for the job was not a member of the Quebec Liberal party and was not approved.

Then in 1922, Derome added Dr. Rosario Fontaine to his community of experts. Fontaine, who had studied with forensics specialist Edmund Locard in Lyon, had followed Derome's work for years and, while a student, spoke to Derome about a career in forensic medicine. Derome, impressed with Fontaine's skill and progress since that time, welcomed him to the lab as an assistant director. Fontaine brought expertise in document analysis, along with other skills to broaden the scope of the laboratory's work.

With his team in place, Derome's forensic work made headlines in a murder trial that was reported across Canada and in the United States. At the first of four trials of priest Adélard Delorme for the murder of his half-brother, the defence declared that Delorme should not be tried due to reasons of insanity. After much deliberation, the jury declared the priest "mentally incapable of being tried for murder." However, Delorme's doctor stated that his patient had not shown "any evident signs of imbecility, insanity, or madness since the first day of his internment" at his hospital. In 1923, the lieutenant governor declared Delorme to be sane and able to stand trail.

It was at the second and third trials that Dr. Wilfrid Derome presented his ballistics evidence. He constructed large models, presenting them to the jury to demonstrate how projectiles fire and are gouged by the barrel in a unique way. He also brought Raoul Delorme's skull to show the precise entry points of the bullets and where he had extracted the slugs. Like a grisly show-and-tell exercise, the jury inspected and passed around the skull. In spite of overwhelming evidence of the bullets from the priest's gun, blood stains, a family quilt used to wrap the victim's head, opportunity, and motive (Raoul had willed money to Adélard, who had large gambling debts), the juries at the second and third trials failed to deliver a verdict. Finally, on October 31, 1924, Delorme was found innocent. After spending 989 days in custody, he was freed.

OTTAWA UNIVERSITY/LA PRESSE

Left: Murder victim Raoul Delorme.

Right: Murder suspect – and half brother – Reverend Adélard Delorme.

By 1923, the original lab was showing the wear of nearly ten years of continual work. Offices were too small, the autopsy room had no space for students, and rooms were unhygienic. Autopsies were being con-

1920
Dr. Wilfrid Derome publishes his textbook *Précis de médecine légale*.

1922
The results of a blood alcohol test are admitted into evidence at a trial for the first time.

1922-24
Delorme affair: Reverend Delorme is accused of murdering his half-brother in Montreal, Quebec.

1924
Through forensic analysis, Dr. Wilfrid Derome links knitted facemasks and bullets to perpetrators of Montreal's Hochelaga Bank robbery.

MUSEE DE LA CIVILISATION, QUEBEC

Dr. Wilfrid Derome preparing ballistics evidence by rolling bullets onto carbon paper and examining the unique striations created when fired.

ducted on stretchers because the tables were broken. Derome wanted a separate building, designed with the highest attention to technical and hygiene standards, allowing space for a museum of artifacts for educational demonstrations. In December, Derome received approval. His new quarters on rue St. Vincent were much larger, but not as modern as he had hoped for. The lab occupied this building until 1968.

Derome's work was in the spotlight again after the violent robbery of the Hochelaga Bank on April 1, 1924. He faced the overwhelming task of linking bullets from several guns with over thirty distinguishing characteristics. He used forensic technology to connect knitted facemasks to their wearers. His expert testimony created a complete account of the robbery, with definitive evidence to convict the seven accused. Six of the accused received the death sentence. (The seventh criminal testified against the others in return for his freedom, but was murdered several weeks later.) In a macabre gesture, hangman Arthur Ellis donated a special item to Derome's laboratory – the rope he had used to mete out punishment for their crimes. The rope can be seen today, twisted to spell "Morel" (the name of the first man hanged), in the Museum of Civilization in Quebec City, along with the rest of the collection from the lab's archives.

Documenting his forensic work was just as important as serving as an expert witness in court. In 1928, Derome wrote a twenty-eight-page booklet, *Le Lieu du crime*, summarizing the directives he had given to Quebec police forces over the years. The booklet outlined how police should treat a crime scene, stipulating that the first job of the police is to neither touch nor move anything. Their second job is to send for experts without delay. Derome reiterated the importance of crime scene photographs and following Alphonse Bertillon's methods of "photographie métrique," measuring and recording exact locations of objects at the crime scene.

Next, in collaboration with Fontaine, Derome published a book on firearms and ballistics, *Expertise en armes à feu*, which was the first major work published by Derome after his *Précis de médecine légale* (*Digest of Forensic Medicine*) in 1920. *Expertise en armes à feu* found an eager audience and praise on two continents. A.S. Herzog, editor of the prestigious *Medico-Legal Journal* published in New York, said that the photographs and diagrams spoke clearly to the reader without translation. Calvin Goddard, who made his reputation as ballistician of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre, praised the book and said that it was the first work to present a satisfactory and complete picture of the most recent work in this field. It was around this time that J. Edgar Hoover visited Derome's lab; he returned to the United States determined to establish a similar institution as part of his FBI crime-fighting team. He visited and consulted with Derome again before the FBI lab opened in 1932.

In the world of forensic medicine, Dr. Wilfrid Derome was in huge demand. He received job offers from chiefs of police in Detroit, New Orleans, St. Louis, and Los Angeles. After the Herzog article, a team from the New York state crime department visited Derome's lab to study the equipment and his methods, returning to report to the governor of New York, Franklin D. Roosevelt. But what of Derome's reputation in Canada? Here, too, he continued to be in

MUSEE DE LA CIVILISATION, QUEBEC

Dr. Rosario Fontaine, fresh from receiving a diploma in legal medicine from the University of Paris, was appointed assistant director of Montreal's forensic science laboratory in 1922.

STALKING CSI

1930
Canada's second forensic science laboratory established in Toronto, Ontario.

1931
Dr. Wilfrid Derome dies.

1932
After his earlier consultations with Dr. Wilfrid Derome, J. Edgar Hoover opens the FBI forensic lab.

1937
RCMP scientific laboratory established in Regina, Saskatchewan. RCMP forensic labs spread across Canada.

Behind the scene of the crime

In 1914, Sir Lomer Gouin, attorney general and premier of Quebec, followed Dr. Wilfrid Derome's advice to establish a forensic medicine laboratory in Montreal. The *Laboratoire de recherches médico-légales*, the first forensic laboratory in North America, was located at 179 Craig Street East. It predated Chicago's laboratory, which opened in 1929, as well as the FBI's facility, which opened in 1932 (and modelled itself after the Montreal lab).

The objectives of the Montreal laboratory were clear – to facilitate police investigations and support the justice system. Ten years after it was founded, the laboratory moved to St. Vincent Street, where it stayed until 1968. At the following Parthenais Street location, it remained associated with Dr. Wilfrid Derome, who directed it until his death in 1931. Then in 1978, the institution was divided into two separate administrative units: the *Laboratoire de police scientifique* (forensic science laboratory) directed by Bernard Péclet and the *Laboratoire de médecine légale* (forensic medicine laboratory) directed by Dr. Jean-Paul Valcourt.

As a world-renowned organization, the two units continue to make advancements in forensic research. In recent years, the field of forensic science has evolved, becoming more refined and diversified. Today, there are more than two hundred such laboratories in North America, partly due to Montreal's pioneering efforts. To preserve this fascinating history, Quebec City's Musée de la civilisation has been entrusted with the Montreal lab's early collection.

great demand. In February 1930, Derome was called as an expert witness in a murder trial in Toronto, and also at another murder trial of two Ontarians that resulted in the death sentence for two brothers. A month later, he conducted a ballistics analysis in Hamilton, and in November, he was sent to New Brunswick for another trial.

Also in 1930, the chief coroner of Ontario arranged to send Dr. Edgar Frankish to consult with Derome at the Montreal laboratory. Frankish operated a private lab in Toronto, and the attorney general wanted to make him director of a newly planned public lab. With Derome's mentoring, Frankish learned what was required to equip and run a professional lab. The Ontario government lab opened in 1930 – the second in Canada.

Dr. Wilfrid Derome could look back at a career of accomplishment and praise, but sadly, he could not look forward very far. Diagnosed with cancer, he painstakingly put his affairs in order. In July 1931, Derome wrote to Premier Louis-Alexandre Taschereau asking him to approve sending the young Dr. Jean-Marie Roussel to Paris to study, just as he once had. (Roussel would become director after his immediate replacement, Rosario Fontaine.) Derome also made careful provisions to protect the livelihoods of his wife and two teenaged children. He died on November 24, 1931, at the age of fifty-four.

Fontaine's obituary for Derome in T*he Canadian Medical Association Journal* in January 1932 summarizes not only Derome's accomplishments, but also the respect he achieved in the medical and legal communities: "His life of labour, equable and devoid of ambition, the great love which he bore for his pupils, combined to make him an amiable and striking figure in the eyes of those who, like us, had the advantage of his acquaintance … the record of time will be needed to appreciate [the] real value of this great and splendid figure who justly received the deferential regard of scientific men throughout the world."

Today, the building in Montreal that houses the current forensic laboratories bears the name *l'édifice Wilfrid-Derome* and his words: "Refrain from assertions you cannot prove." The declaration forms the cornerstone of the work that continues there today, contributing to Wilfrid Derome's legacy as Canada's father of forensics.

Heather Wright is a freelance writer and educator living in Kitchener, Ontario. Her book, tentatively titled *Extreme Beliefs: Cults and New Religion*, is scheduled for release by Altitude Publishing in May 2007.

Et Cetera

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Visit the website of the Canadian Society of Forensic Science at ‹www.csfs.ca/history/histindex.htm›.

In *The Beaver*: "A Monstrous Plot," by André Pelchat, June/July 2006. Thanks to forensic science, Albert Guay was found guilty of an airplane bombing in Quebec in 1949. Back issues available through TheBeaver.ca.

1950
During the Guay trial, involving the explosion of a plane in Quebec, forensic analysis of debris is admitted into evidence for the first time.

1978
Two separate units within the *Laboratoire de recherches médico légales* are created: the *Laboratoire de police scientifique* and the *Laboratoire de médicine légale*.

1984
DNA profiling, the first DNA "fingerprinting" technique, discovered by Dr. Alec Jeffries of Leicester University, England.

1996
Deposit of the collection of the *Laboratoire de sciences judiciaires* et *médecine légale* in the Musée de la Civilisation, Québec.

A twentieth-century portrait of Françoise-Marie Jacqueline by Adam Sherriff Scott (1887-1980). Ongoing research in Canada and France has brought the dramatic details of her courage and leadership to light.

The Lioness of Acadia

In March 1640, a young woman left her safe and familiar life in France for the New World to marry a man she may have met only once in her life. Swept up in adventure, she became one of Canada's greatest heroines. by Susan Poizner

Françoise-Marie Jacquelin was born into an upper middle-class family in the city of Nogent-le-Rotrou in France in 1621. The daughter of a doctor, she moved in bourgeois circles and dressed in silk and taffeta gowns. She was expected to marry, raise a family, and manage a household as her mother had done. Unlike her mother, Françoise-Marie and her sister Gabrielle learned to read and write in a convent school. Literacy meant French girls at the time were given more responsibilities in managing their households. It also meant they could read romantic novels, which told daring tales of brave knights battling foes in faraway lands.

At eighteen, Françoise-Marie was setting off from La Rochelle on her own romantic adventure in the New World. Two attendants, including a maidservant, accompanied her. The ship carried a large arsenal: nine cannon, three mortars, sixteen muskets, two dozen pikes, and ammunition. Françoise-Marie soon learned that her new husband was embroiled in a rivalry that would quickly escalate into a civil war.

CANADIAN MILITARY HERITAGE

In summer of 1606, fourteen-year-old Charles de Saint-Étienne de La Tour sailed from France to Acadia with his father and a group of adventurers led by the visionary Baron Jean de Biencourt de Poutrincourt. Intending to create a thriving French colony in this resource-rich land, they landed at Port Royal in today's Nova Scotia, founded the previous year by explorer Samuel de Champlain.

Turbulent times awaited French fur traders in Acadia. Political disputes over fur rights discouraged traders, and many returned to France by 1613. But Biencourt's twenty-two-year-old son, also named Charles, stayed on, accompanied by young Charles La Tour and a handful of other free-spirited men. They lived among the Mi'kmaq and learned their language. La Tour married a Mi'kmaq woman who bore him three daughters before she died young.

The Frenchmen slowly built up trade with a company based in La Rochelle, France, exporting pelts and salt-fish and importing staples such as wine, lard, spices, and salt. When Charles Biencourt died in 1623, La Tour took over the leadership of the small company, which

NEW BRUNSWICK MUSEUM, SAINT JOHN, N.B. / 1987-17-459

Few images of those at the centre of the Acadian civil war exist, and the accuracy is often in doubt. This portrait of Charles de Menou d'Aulnay at age thirty-seven is thought to be a copy of an original painted in Paris in 1642.

thrived despite the constant challenges of Dutch, English, Basque, and French poachers. By 1631, La Tour had built a new fort – Fort La Tour – on the Saint John River. That same year, La Tour was rewarded for his accomplishments. A letter from Cardinal Richelieu, the French king's chief minister, appointed him governor of Acadia and a lieutenant general for Louis XIII. This was a great honour for a man of La Tour's modest social standing. At thirty-eight, he was well established in Acadia.

However, he had a rival.

Due to confusion in Paris over the geography of Acadia, the territorial division of the colony and its profits was unclear. La Tour shared the governorship with aristocratic naval officer Charles de Menou d'Aulnay. Ruthlessly ambitious, d'Aulnay hated La Tour, whom he saw as socially inferior. His goal was to be the sole leader of Acadia by whatever means necessary.

In 1636, d'Aulnay married Jeanne Motin, a devout French Catholic. After the first of eight d'Aulnay children was born, La Tour realized he also needed a male heir. He commissioned his friend and agent in France, Guilliame Desjardins, to secure him a bride – Françoise-Marie Jacquelin. La Tour and Françoise-Marie had likely met during one of La Tour's previous trips to France, though no details of that meeting are known.

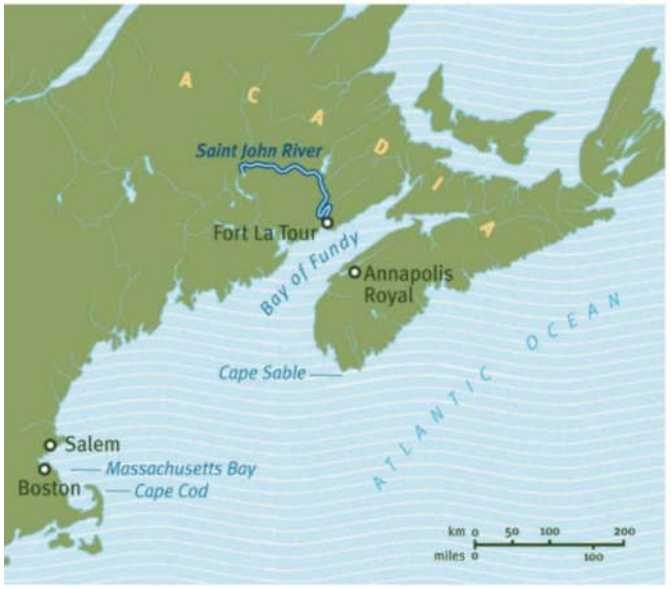
La Tour had told Desjardins to encourage the young Françoise-Marie to leave France for an uncertain life in Acadia by offering a generous agreement: cash, a large inheritance fund, and a half share in his property. On New Year's Eve 1639, Desjardins joined Françoise-Marie and members of her family to sign the marriage contract. Three months later, she set off from La Rochelle.

In the first weeks after her arrival in June 1640, Françoise-Marie adjusted to day-to-day life at Fort La Tour. Looking out from the fort, she could watch La Tour's men netting salmon in the Saint John River. Aboriginal trappers came to trade pelts. Inside there was a cookhouse, bakery, blacksmith, chapel, trading room, vegetable garden, and livestock. Soon, Françoise-Marie took on some responsibility by helping manage the fort's daily affairs.

In July 1640, Françoise-Marie accompanied her husband across the Bay of Fundy to visit d'Aulnay's Port Royal headquarters on the pretence of introducing Françoise-Marie to d'Aulnay's wife. La Tour's true motivation was more likely to check that d'Aulnay wasn't taking more than his fair share of fur. La Tour sent a shallop ashore to ask permission to land. D'Aulnay replied that La Tour was not welcome. Soon after, d'Aulnay's vessels approached La Tour's ship and the

BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE, PARIS

Françoise-Marie's journey to Acadia started at the seaport of La Rochelle in western France. La Rochelle became a hub of trade between France and colonies in Canada, the Caribbean Antilles, and Africa.



DAWN RUCK

Despite hostilities between France and England in the seventeenth century, relations between Acadia and New England were comparatively cordial. Both colonies benefitted from mutual trade. The Acadians relied on Massachusetts for iron tools, textiles, sugar, and spices, for which they traded furs, fish, livestock, and wool.

two exchanged cannon fire, killing one of Françoise-Marie's loyal guards. In the only existing account, d'Aulnay blamed La Tour for taking the first shot.

D'Aulnay's men grounded La Tour's boat, rounded up his men, and threw them in the dungeon. Françoise-Marie and La Tour were also taken prisoner. All were held captive until La Tour agreed to sign a proposal to bring their quarrel to the king's court, where d'Aulnay felt his powerful contacts would ensure he won. La Tour was humiliated, and Françoise-Marie saw first-hand how ruthlessly d'Aulnay would pursue his goal of domination.

Once La Tour signed the proposal, d'Aulnay stepped up his campaign to discredit his rival in the French court. He wrote letters and reports accusing La Tour of villainy, violence, and greed. Among those reading the reports and influencing the king's decisions were d'Aulnay's contacts and kinsmen. At the same time, d'Aulnay aggressively set out to conquer areas officially under La Tour's rule.

In 1642, d'Aulnay's political assassination of La Tour paid off. A series of decrees from France stripped La Tour of his powers, forbidding him to import essential supplies and arms from France and calling for his arrest if he did not come to Paris and explain himself to the king. La Tour knew that in France he would be imprisoned, possibly even charged with treason.

In his stead, Françoise-Marie journeyed to France to plead her husband's case in front of the Grand Prior. She did this with grace, presenting key documents attesting to her husband's innocence and achieving a partial victory. The Grand Prior allowed her to return with a warship to Acadia to help her husband in his defence. The issue was not resolved, but La Tour would have a fighting chance. On her return, Françoise-Marie was prevented access by d'Aulnay's blockade of the Bay of Fundy. La Tour was able to reach her ship in the night, and the two made their way to Boston. There they negotiated for enough ships and supplies to run the blockade and return, together, to Fort La Tour.

During the next three years, d'Aulnay put a stranglehold on his rival, continuing his blockade of the Bay of Fundy and keeping the La Tours confined to Fort La Tour. Around 1643, Françoise-Marie gave birth to a son – he would be her only child. In early 1644, Françoise-Marie made a second trip to Paris to plead her husband's case in the French courts. This time, however, the courts sided with d'Aulnay and ordered Françoise-Marie to stay in France or risk being put to death. She defied the order and fled in disguise to England where she made a contract with Captain Bailly of the *Gillyflower* for passage back to Fort La Tour.

Bailly did not live up to his end of the contract, prolonging the return trip for six months while fishing off the Grand Banks. When they finally neared Cape

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-011237

Adam Sherriff Scott's *The Fate of the Defendants of Fort Latour, 1645*, a 1920 depiction of one of the greatest betrayals in Canadian history. D'Aulnay's reversal on his promise to spare Françoise-Marie's men earned him the moniker of "that dastardly d'Aulnay."

With a rope tied around her own neck, Françoise-Marie watched helplessly as her men were hanged one by one. Françoise-Marie, her young son, and woman servant were spared. But when Françoise-Marie was caught trying to smuggle a message to her husband through native traders who had returned in the spring, d'Aulnay had her imprisoned.

Sable, the ship was intercepted by d'Aulnay onboard his warship, the *Grand Cardinal*. Françoise-Marie remained hidden below deck while d'Aulnay ushered the *Gillyflower* out of Acadia and toward New England. Unbeknownst to Françoise-Marie, her husband was in Boston negotiating for aid in his battle with d'Aulnay. The *Gillyflower* arrived in Boston eight days after La Tour departed for his return to Acadia.

But the business alliances her husband had created in Boston proved beneficial, as Françoise-Marie was forced to stay there until she could find a way to get past the blockade. She also built her own alliances with the people of Boston, in part through her studies in reformed Anglicanism, which the colonists practised. Françoise-Marie spent months navigating a treacherous legal battle with Bailly over his breach of contract, at times coming close to receiving a pittance for her troubles, at other times, approaching total victory. The courts finally granted her a settlement of £2,000. Before she could collect the entire amount, Bailly's ship fled Boston. But Françoise-Marie had collected enough to commission three ships to sneak past d'Aulnay's blockade in the harsh winter. She returned safely, though exhausted, to Fort La Tour. After nearly a year apart, the couple was reunited.

The blockade and the expense of continuing hostilities took a heavy toll. The La Tours were low on supplies. The men were hungry; some abandoned the fort. La Tour ran out of furs for trading and was in serious debt due to his purchase of weapons and warships. By spring of 1645, it was clear that unless d'Aulnay was defeated soon, La Tour would be forced to surrender. The only option was to return to Boston to see if friends would lend money for enough ships and soldiers to help break the blockade. La Tour left Françoise-Marie in charge of the fort with just forty-five men.

Shortly after La Tour left, a dispute erupted between Françoise-Marie and the fort's Récollet fathers over her deepened interest in Protestantism. Exacerbated by the cold and lack of food, tempers

flared and the argument got out of hand. The Récollets and several of the men left Fort La Tour and sought refuge at Port Royal. There, they told d'Aulnay that La Tour and a number of men had left for Boston.

D'Aulnay gathered a small army and sailed the *Grand Cardinal* and a small fleet to Fort La Tour. Certainly d'Aulnay would have expected Françoise-Marie to surrender. Instead, she led her husband's men into battle. They had little but muskets and courage. D'Aulnay had sixteen cannon and hundreds of soldiers. Outnumbered and outgunned, François-Marie and her band kept d'Aulnay's forces at bay for three days.

On Easter Sunday, April 16, 1645, a frustrated d'Aulnay pulled his ships out of the firing line to plan a new strategy. Françoise-Marie encouraged her men to rest while a forty-seven-year-old Swiss named Hans Vandre kept watch. But when Vandre saw d'Aulnay's superior forces mounting a ground assault, he knew the battle couldn't be won and betrayed Françoise-Marie, allowing d'Aulnay's forces into the fort. Françoise-Marie and her men realized too late what was happening.

After fierce hand-to-hand combat, Françoise-Marie agreed to surrender if d'Aulnay would spare the lives of her men. He agreed, but went back on his word. Only two men were spared: Vandre the betrayer and one other "who had his life spared on condition that he would perform the execution," according to an account by Nicolas Denys, a member of the Company of New France and an ally of La Tour. With a rope tied around her own neck, Françoise-Marie watched helplessly as her men were hanged one by one. Françoise-Marie, her young son, and her maidservant were spared. But when Françoise-Marie was caught trying to smuggle a message to her husband through native traders who had returned in the spring, d'Aulnay had her imprisoned. Within three weeks, at age twenty-four, she would die – some speculated from poison, but many more believe of a broken heart.

Susan Poizner is the producer and director of "Françoise-Marie Jacquelin: Lioness of Acadia," one episode in the thirteen-part television series called *Mother Tongue*, which explores the roles of ethnic heroines in Canada's past. For more information visit ‹www.mothertongue.ca›.

Et Cetera

Fortune & La Tour: The Civil War in Acadia by M.A. MacDonald. Methuen, Toronto, 1983.

From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People 1604–1755 by N.E.S. Griffiths. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal & Kingston, 2005.

In *The Beaver*: "Private War Over Acadia," by André Pelchat, December 2000/January 2001, Vol.80:6. A vivid account of the rivalry and war between La Tour and d'Aulnay. Back issue available through TheBeaver.ca.

After the war

It was months before Charles La Tour learned the fate of his fort and his valiant wife. Having lost everything, he moved to Quebec City to start a new life. Five years later, in May 1650, he learned that Charles de Menou d'Aulnay had drowned in a canoeing accident. Some reports said that a young Mi'kmaq warrior, who d'Aulnay had earlier slapped in the face during a minor dispute, watched from the shore as d'Aulnay struggled in the frigid waters for hours before going under.

La Tour returned to Acadia and proposed a union with d'Aulnay's widow, Jeanne Motin, which would allow him to reclaim his role as governor. Herself in debt as a result of d'Aulnay's wars, Motin agreed, marrying La Tour in 1653. La Tour was sixty, Motin in her mid-thirties. They had five children.

La Tour has many direct descendants in the region as a result of this union. But until recently little was known about the fate of Françoise-Marie's young son by Charles La Tour, other than that after her death, d'Aulnay sent the boy and a maidservant back to France. French researcher Jean-Marie Germe recently discovered the child's baptism records in Nogent-le-Rotrou, dated December 26, 1645. The boy was two years old and had been adopted by Françoise-Marie's sister Gabrielle and her husband. He was called Charles-Françoise-Marie, after his mother and father.

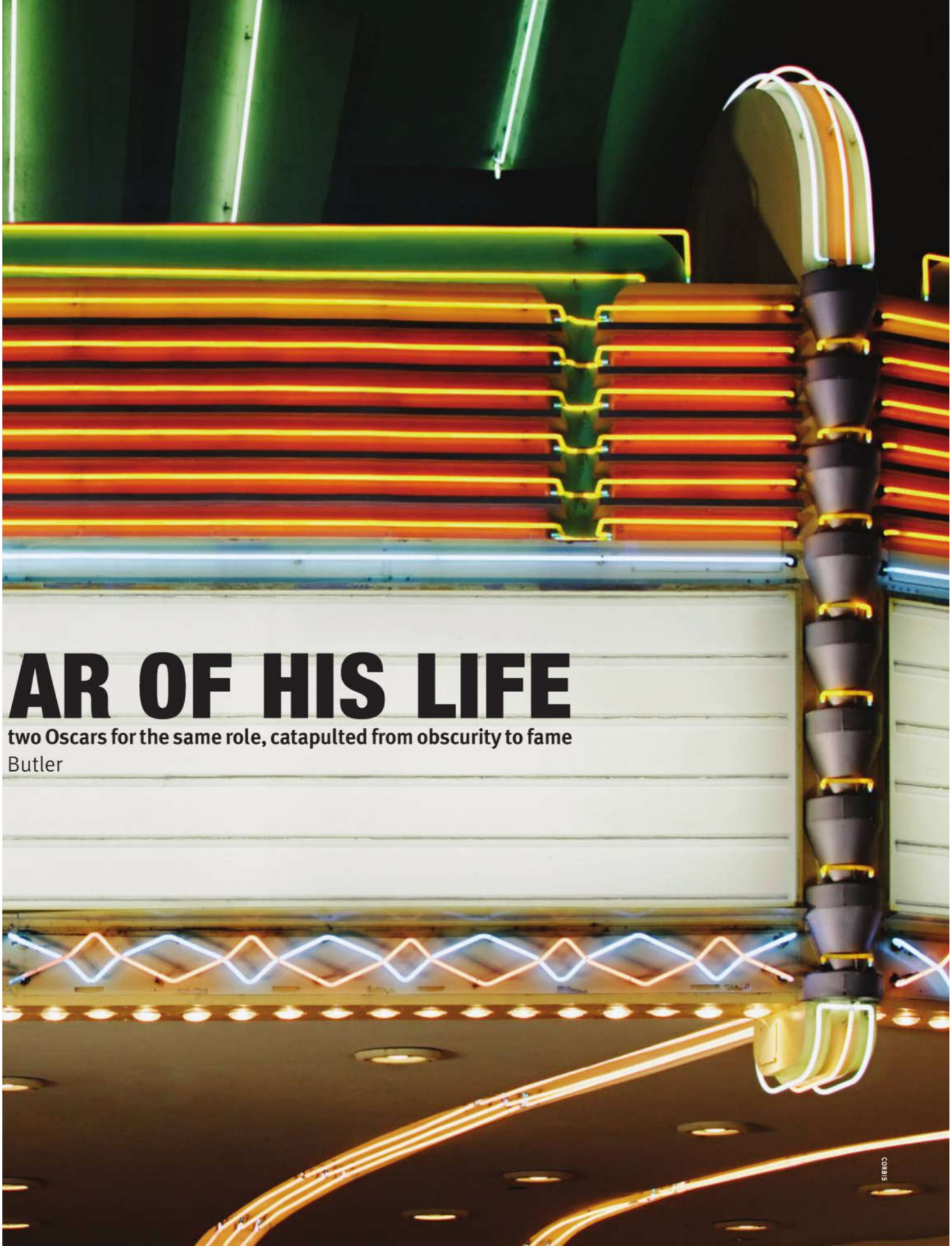
It was also here that Germe discovered records of Françoise-Marie's baptism on July 18, 1621. A novel on the life of Françoise-Marie published in the 1920s gave her birth year as 1602 and described her as a retired actress in her late 30s when she joined La Tour. This fictional account crossed over into historical accounts, many of which still give 1602 as her birth year. Now it is known that she was much younger than at first believed.

In the 1970s, journalist M.A. MacDonald stumbled upon the story of Françoise-Marie and wrote an article on her for *Chatelaine*. After receiving a Canada Council grant, MacDonald spent three months in the archives of Paris and Nogent-de-Rotrou. She uncovered court edicts and business documents, even Françoise-Marie's marriage contract. The Massachusetts State Archives were a gold mine of information and had accounts of a 1644 court case that Françoise-Marie filed in Boston. MacDonald used her research to write her account of the Acadian civil war, entitled *Fortune & La Tour*.

Most of the documents MacDonald found were written by d'Aulnay, who wanted to convince the French king that La Tour was a scoundrel so that he could rule Acadia alone. Without written testimony from La Tour, it's impossible to know if these reports are true. In his contemporary accounts, Nicolas Denys described Françoise-Marie's heroic defence of Fort La Tour and called her "La Commandante."

THE BEST YE

Nova Scotia's Harold Russell, the only person to win by turning a war injury into an inspiration. by Paul



AR OF HIS LIFE

two Oscars for the same role, catapulted from obscurity to fame

Butler

"Rugged, rocky, cliffy, fretted with coves, bays, inlets, sprinkled with islands, sailboats, freighters, fishing smacks … There were half-remembered landmarks. Church steeples. The silver curve of railroad tracks. Dirt roads winding among wooden houses …"

It is 1944, and munitions instructor Sergeant Harold Russell lies in a hospital bed dreaming of North Sydney, Nova Scotia, where he was born. Just days after losing his hands in a freak accident, heavy drugs keep him in a state somewhere between sleep and delirium. Harold imagines himself floating down to touch the Nova Scotian ground, then feels himself being hoisted onto his father's shoulders and taken to downtown Sydney where people are cheering and waving flags to celebrate the end of World War I. "Never again in your lifetime will you see a celebration like this, my boy," Harold's father tells him.

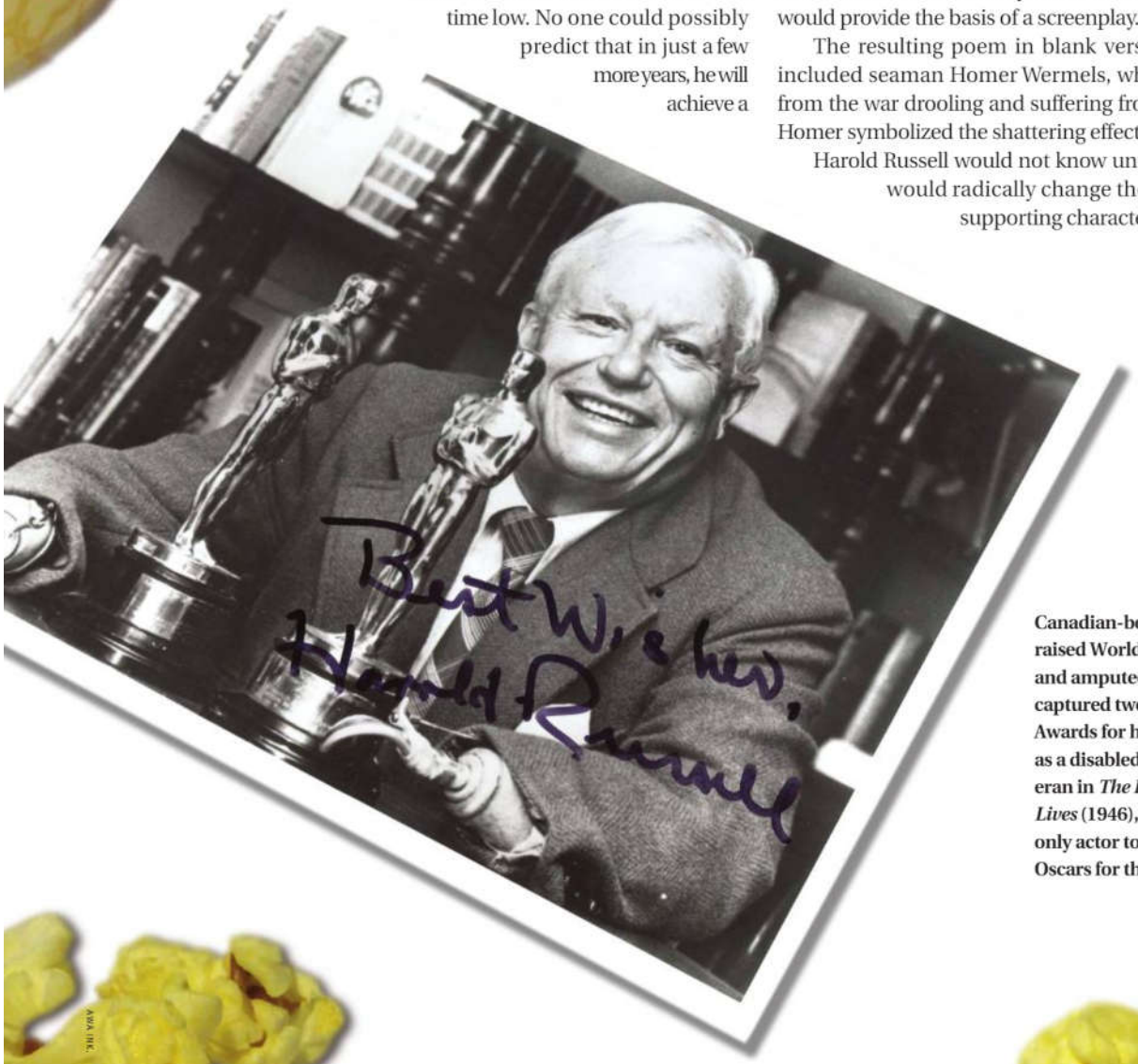
"There will never be another war."

Harold Russell's life is at an all-time low. No one could possibly predict that in just a few more years, he will achieve a unique distinction in one of the world's most competitive and prestigious professions – a profession into which he had never sought entry. At the 1946 Academy Awards, Russell will become the only actor ever to win two Oscars for the same role.

As the war drew to a close, things began changing in the world of film. Public hunger shifted away from Errol Flynn–style heroics. People wanted to see movies that reflected the disruptions and adjustments they were experiencing in their own lives. Ex-servicemen were flooding back to their American, Canadian, and European hometowns to find that civilian life had challenges of its own.

The germ of the story that would propel Russell to international fame began taking shape as early as August 1944 when MGM mogul Samuel Goldwyn read an article in *Time* magazine about a group of injured marines trying to readjust to civilian life. Aware that this was an emerging topic in North America, and beyond, Goldwyn commissioned MacKinlay Kantor to write a novel that would provide the basis of a screenplay.

The resulting poem in blank verse, *Glory for Me*, included seaman Homer Wermels, who returns home from the war drooling and suffering from body spasms. Homer symbolized the shattering effect of war. Although Harold Russell would not know until much later, he would radically change the concept of this supporting character.



Canadian-born, Boston-raised World War II veteran and amputee Harold Russell captured two Academy Awards for his performance as a disabled returning veteran in *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), making him the only actor to ever win two Oscars for the same role.

Harold John Russell was born in North Sydney, Nova Scotia, in 1914. After his father died in 1919, Harold's family moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where his mother trained to be a nurse. Intending to found a hospital in Cape Breton, she planned to return to Canada with her three sons once qualified. In the end, however, the family remained in the United States.

There was little in Harold's early life to suggest a future as a film star. In fact, the young man viewed himself as a nonentity. "As a kid in Nova Scotia I had failed to make friends," he recalled. He had "only barely squeaked through in school." Harold intended to become an engineer, but had failed to obtain the necessary college scholarship. Instead, he went to work in a grocery store, progressing slowly from delivery boy to meat cutter to store manager.

The same lack of confidence affected his relationships with the opposite sex. When Rita, the girl he was timidly courting, appeared unimpressed by her suitor, Harold enlisted the help of an uncle who had connections. Despite such interventions, Harold's inferiority complex persisted until an unlikely turning point. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941, Harold Russell immediately enlisted in the U.S. war effort.

While he had failed to realize his ambitions as a civilian, the forces soon picked Harold out for advancement. After mastering the art of parachuting and learning how to set a booby trap, Harold was asked to stay on at demolition school as an instructor. Working steadily with an increasing number of trainees, he was promoted to sergeant, but as months turned into years, a new anxiety developed. "Out of eighteen instructors [at demolition school]," he recounted, "eleven had been injured in the seven months I'd been teaching there." The worst of these incidents involved him and another instructor who had gone up a tree to fix a charge. It exploded and blew off his fellow instructor's hand. The experience was a bad omen. Harold resolved that if he were to be injured, it should at least be in battle rather than in a training exercise, so he sought a transfer.

Harold succeeded in getting transferred to an outfit in North Carolina that was preparing to go oversees, but there were intensive demolition exercises to get through first. It was during one of these practices that disaster struck.

There was no warning. Watched by his class as he was going through the same routine he had followed countless times before, Harold "crimped the cap and fuse, slid them in. Then – BOOM!!!"

The agonizing recovery and rehabilitation process brought many issues to the fore, the worst of which was Harold's sudden belief that his success as a soldier had been the odd fluke that only wartime could produce. Lying in a hospital bed day after day, he began to feel that joining the army had merely provided "a glamorous alibi for running away from a job that offered little, a girl [Rita] I had failed to win." Having vowed to himself before the accident that he would never return to his old job, it now seemed that even the options he had rejected were closed to him. At Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., Harold went through operations on his stumps to enable the fitting of prosthetic hooks. Ever eager for a challenge, he began to practice manipulating his new hands. He wanted to become as independent as possible.

Harold's dexterity opened up an unexpected door. The army was in the process of commissioning an instructional film to inspire amputees to overcome their disabilities. Harold's progress with his prosthetic hooks made him the perfect subject. A film crew captured him performing various, everyday tasks – squeezing toothpaste, playing Ping-Pong, dialing a rotary telephone. *Diary of a Sergeant*, shot both in the Walter Reed Hospital and at the old Paramount studios in Long Island, was released in March 1945. At the premiere, Harold reacted with pained embarrassment to the sight of himself on celluloid. "I wriggled and squirmed and blushed as I watched my shadow go lumbering across the screen," he said, "And as for acting, I winced every time that oversized gargoyle tried to portray anything more complicated than staring into space."

Although the film was narrated and he had no lines, Harold's innocence and good-natured humility had a way of showing through. For the unwitting Harold, *Diary of a Sergeant* was to act as a calling card.

The Best Years of Our Lives **looks at the challenge of war veterans resuming their lives after years of upheaval and separation. In the scene, upper left, Homer (Harold Russell) lets down his guard and reminisces with Butch (played by Hoagy Carmichael), the owner of the drinking parlour he'd frequented before the war.**

In a heart-breaking scene toward the end of the film, Homer confesses to girlfriend Wilma (Cathy O'Donnell) that he doesn't believe she could feel the same way about him as she did before he lost his hands in the war. Convincing him otherwise is a battle of a different kind.

Meanwhile, in Hollywood, casting the Homer Wermels character – as written in MacKinlay Kantor's poem *Glory For Me* – was proving a stumbling block both for Samuel Goldwyn and for William Wyler, the film's director. Then things changed. One evening, Wyler saw a screening of *Diary of a Sergeant*. As the young director watched the fresh-faced Sergeant Russell cheerfully negotiate day-to-day tasks with his hooks, he was struck with an idea. He rushed to phone Goldwyn. The next morning, Goldwyn had a private viewing of the army film. When he saw Harold, he exclaimed, "Get me that man!"

Unbeknownst to Harold, who was busy attending business classes in Boston, his acting career had already taken off. A woman phoned him, claiming to represent Samuel Goldwyn, and offered Harold a role in a movie starring Fredric March and Myrna Loy. Naturally, the young veteran assumed it was a joke. The woman persisted, however, and soon a meeting with MGM was arranged in New York. Harold was offered $5,000 for the part and told to hurry his answer. Practical, yet a little naive, he ignored the concerns of his now-fiancée, Rita, about accepting too quickly. "The way I figured it then," he later said, "Goldwyn was practically throwing his money away. I was no actor."

Although the contract was doubled in renegotiations, Harold Russell received no residuals. Later, he regretted his cavalier attitude toward payment. In the short term, however, he was off to Hollywood, where his status as an innocent would soon reap unexpected rewards. The film – titled *The Best Years of Our Lives* and rewritten by playwright Robert E. Sherwood – was soon underway, and Harold enjoyed rubbing shoulders with famous co-stars and an odd assortment of film people, including the "old man" himself, Samuel Goldwyn.

But Wyler's motto to actors, "If it feels right, do it," was not meant for Harold. Often, he came across as too cheerful for such a troubled character. He had a problem conveying anger. In one scene, Harold's character (renamed Homer Parrish), was supposed to react angrily to fascist comments made by a customer at a soda bar, throwing the loose-lipped customer through a glass counter. However, Harold liked Ray Teal, the actor playing the fascist, so he was unable to express the necessary rage.

Thinking about how he could rile the ever-placid Harold, Wyler took him aside and "confided" that, despite appearances, Teal really was a fascist, and there was literature in his pocket to prove it. The gullible young veteran believed Wyler, displaying newfound enthusiasm in his onscreen outburst.

The low-key authenticity of Harold's performance was part of a deliberate plan. Wyler was looking for a subtle, naturalistic sensibility not typical of Hollywood films. Adding to the texture of naturalism, actresses Myrna Loy, Teresa Wright, and Cathy O'Donnell were asked to refrain from wearing makeup and to wear their costumes a few weeks in advance of shooting, so they would feel more comfortable in their roles.

The lives of three returning servicemen were depicted in a similarly plain and honest fashion. Homer (Harold Russell), from the navy; Al (Fredric March), from the army; and Fred (Dana Andrews), from the air force, return to their hometown together. Flying home on the same plane, they share war stories, admitting to one another their dread and uncertainty of going home. Using his hooks, Homer can light his own cigarettes and carry his bags but, as his two new comrades reflect, the navy could not teach him how to take his girl in his arms.

Later, in a touching scene that paralleled Harold's relationship with Rita, Homer's childhood sweetheart, Wilma (Cathy O'Donnell), makes a final attempt to get through to her recently disabled friend (and former fiancé). Bitter and afraid of rejection, Homer's best defense is to reject first. Eventually he relents, allowing Wilma to help him unfasten his prosthetics and get into bed. Ironically, accepting her help is yet another effort to drive her away. Homer reasons that by assisting him, Wilma will discover for herself the unromantic truth of his disability.

When *The Best Years of Our Lives* was released in 1946, audiences in North America and Europe immediately identified with the disillusioned vets and also recognized the suffering of those who had been left behind, represented by such characters as Wilma. Many women on the home front confronted the horrors of war in a different way – by dealing with the psychological scars of their returning men.

Many scenes, even some not involving Homer, mirrored aspects of Harold's own rehabilitation. Fred fears returning to the menial work he escaped from to become

SELECTED CANADIAN OSCAR HIGHLIGHTS

YEARS

1928-1929 Toronto-born Mary Pickford wins best actress in a leading role for her first "talkie," *Coquette*.

1929-1930 Montreal-born Norma Shearer wins best actress in a leading role for *The Divorcée*.

1930-1931 Coburg-born Marie Dressler wins best actress in a leading role for *Min and Bill*.

1937 Quebec-born Mack Sennett is honoured with a special Academy Award "for his lasting contribution to the comedy technique of the screen."

1943 & 1944 New Brunswick-born Walter Pidgeon is nominated for best actor in a supporting role in succesive years for *Mrs. Miniver* and *Madam*.

a flying ace in the air force. This dilemma Harold knew only too well. Without a great deal of luck, career opportunities and personal fulfillment were elusive for the returning vet.

The most striking parallel of all, however, is the film's last scene in which Homer marries Wilma. Harold did indeed marry his childhood sweetheart, Rita, in Hollywood while *The Best Years of Our Lives* was still shooting. And, just as in the film, he had struggled to believe he was a suitable mate after his injury.

Although both critical and public response to *The Best Years of Our Lives* was highly favourable, the film was not without its detractors. Abraham Polonsky, writing in the *Hollywood Quarterly*, believed that the film too neatly resolved the characters' displacement in society by its happy ending. But at the Oscars that year, *The Best Years of Our Lives* cleaned up, winning best director, best script, best music, best film editing, and best actor (Fredric March), eclipsing Frank Capra's perennial Christmas favourite *It's a Wonderful Life*, which was also nominated in many of the same categories.

Harold Russell won a special Oscar for "being an inspiration to all returning veterans." Although also nominated for best actor in a supporting role, he was not expected to win. "I found out, months later," he recalled, "that when I was nominated for supporting actor, they figured I didn't have a chance; the other guys [Charles Coburn, William Demarest, Claude Rains, Clifton Webb] had too much background."

When they did announce Harold's name for the award, he was as unprepared as everyone else. "When they got to supporting actor, they practically threw me out on the stage." While the modest Harold took the new level of attention cheerfully in stride, some professional actors, such as fellow nominee Clifton Webb, did not appreciate being upstaged by a novice. "On *Razor's Edge*," he later said, "I lost the supporting actor Oscar to that man with no hands. It caused a scandal."

Following advice from Wyler, and his own common sense, Harold made little attempt to duplicate his initial Hollywood success. Instead, he continued his education at business school and set up a consulting firm, Harold Russell Associates, dealing with matters relating to people with disabilities. He also became an important player in veteran disability issues, serving as national commander of American Veterans and president of the World Veterans Federation. In 1964, he was appointed chairman of a government committee that helped bring about groundbreaking anti-discrimination laws, such as the 1973 Rehabilitation Act.

The taste for the entertainment industry never quite left Harold, however, and he made many cause-related appearances in nightclubs, sometimes playing piano duets with his hooks, a skill he showed off with Hoagy Carmichael in *The Best Years of Our Lives*. Before his death on January 29, 2002, Harold also rekindled his interest in film acting, appearing in *Inside Moves* in 1980 and *Dogtown* in 1997.

Harold Russell was at the centre of another "first" in Oscar history, one that again demonstrated that he was not quite in sync with Hollywood culture. Ever practical and honest, in 1992, he sold his best supporting actor Oscar to an anonymous bidder for $60,500 in order to pay his wife's medical bills. The Academy was so incensed it has since brought in a measure that requires all Oscar recipients to sign an agreement that they will not sell their Oscars. Harold's response to the controversy was typically straightforward. "I don't know why anybody would be critical," he said. "My wife's health is much more important than sentimental reasons. The movie will be here, even if Oscar isn't."

Paul Butler is the author of the novel *NaGeira* (2006), about the woman in folklore and oral history believed to have been a founder of Newfoundland society.

Et Cetera

Victory in My Hands by Harold Russell (with Victor Rosen). Creative Age Press, Inc., New York, 1949.

The Best Years of My Life by Harold Russell (with Dan Ferullo), introduction by William Wyler. Paul S. Eriksson, Middlebury, Vermont, 1981.

Hollywood Goes to War 1939–1952 by Colin Shindler. Routledge & Kegan Ltd., London, 1979.

In *The Beaver*: "The Canadians Who Shaped Hollywood" by Paul Butler. February/March 2004. Seventy-five years ago, Canada's Mary Pickford won the Academy Award for best actress in a motion picture. Along with fellow Canadian Mack Sennett, she helped forge the character of Hollywood in the silent era. Back issue available through TheBeaver.ca.

SHOWN INDICATE THE YEARS FOR WHICH THE AWARDS WERE GIVEN, NOT THE YEAR OF THE CEREMONY.

1948 Toronto-born Walter Huston wins best actor in a supporting role for *Treasure of the Sierra Madre*.

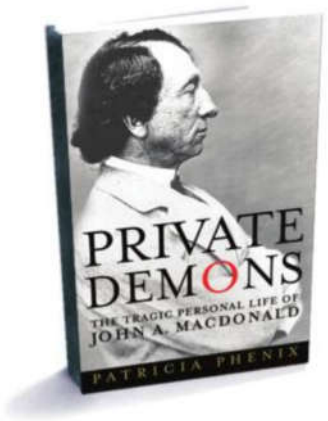
1967 Toronto-born Norman Jewison's *In the Heat of the Night* wins best picture.

1989 The National Film Board of Canada is awarded an honorary Oscar in recognition of "excellence in every area of filmmaking."

1997 Ontario-born James Cameron wins best director for *Titanic*.

2003 Quebec-born Denys Arcand wins the best foreign language film award for *The Barbarian Invasions*.

Reviews



FOR CREIGHTON OUT LOUD

Private Demons: The Tragic Personal Life of John A. Macdonald
by Patricia Phenix
McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 2006
344 pp., illus., $34.99 hardcover

One reason why Donald Creighton's two-volume biography of Sir John A. Macdonald has stood up for more than half a century is the attention it pays to our first prime minister's private life. Creighton knew that a public leader's character and behaviour almost always reflect a measure of private circumstance. This was particularly so in the case of Sir John A. Macdonald, known to have a drinking problem and unusual domestic situations.

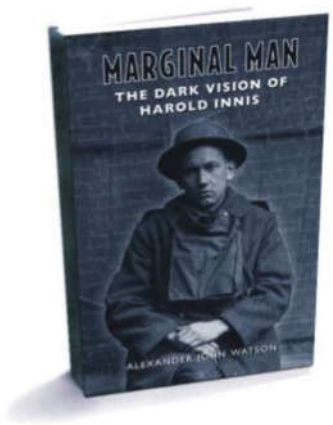
So Creighton, slaving for years in archives, taking his notes by hand and relying on index cards, gave us rich, detailed coverage of John A's upbringing in Kingston, his struggles as a young lawyer, his first marriage to Isabella Clark, his drinking bouts, his second marriage to Agnes Bernard, his personal health, and, of course, his illnesses and death. In Creighton's pages, Macdonald – the public figure – is almost constantly distracted by worries about Isabella's mysterious invalidism, the debts caused by his erratic legal practice and struggle to maintain a respectable standard of living, and the tragedy of his daughter Mary's hydrocephalism (abnormal accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid inside the brain). Always a congenial fellow in a hard-drinking age, Macdonald would occasionally buckle under the combination of public and private burdens and take sustained refuge in the bottle. Always he recovered – always he got through crises, elections, parliamentary sessions – until dying as a much-beloved, high-achieving statesman in 1891. His last election campaign that year had featured his ringing campaign slogan: "A British subject I was born, a British subject I will die."

A few of Creighton's themes have been queried over the years. It has been suggested that even more attention should have been given to Macdonald's early ambition to do well financially through corporate activities and land deals. Why is it that Macdonald's relatives mostly appear as burdens and distractions, adding to the great man's troubles? Isn't it a kind of perversion that Creighton leads us to look upon Isabella and Mary, desperately sick and tragic figures, as crosses for Macdonald to bear? Creighton may have been manipulating the past in presenting John A. Macdonald as a heroic victim, required to overcome not only all his private problems, but also the machinations of evil Liberals, Americans, provincial premiers, and many others. New biographers are at work on many facets of Macdonald's life; in the meantime, the best way to sample a more nuanced approach to our first prime minister is to read the twenty-one-page entry on him by P.B. Waite and J.K. Johnson in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Vol. 12).

This season, Patricia Phenix adds nothing of any value to our understanding in *Private Demons: The Tragic Personal Life of John A. Macdonald*. Her book is a light rehash from standard sources, written with little context, insight, or regard for accuracy. In Phenix's pages, Macdonald's "British subject" quote, for example, is incorrectly attributed to him in his youth. She makes him president of Manufacturers Life Insurance Company some forty years prematurely. Her Macdonald is ruthlessly ambitious, has a drinking problem from the age of fifteen, and is a "party animal" with a "brain firing on all cylinders," though sometimes experiencing lulls in "the electrical storm that was his life." Louis Riel, we are told, is "a Montreal lawyer," the city core of Toronto in 1875 is dominated by "budget retail stores such as Eaton's and Woolworth's," and we are asked to imagine Agnes Macdonald perching on the cowcatcher of a CPR locomotive as, "like a rollercoaster car" it speeds down the Kicking Horse Pass "at a sixty-degree angle." Some ride!

Romping breathlessly through the highly charged passes of Macdonald's private life, the author seldom pauses to reflect or sum up, preferring instead to make mountains out of trivial molehills, often generated by crank correspondents and newspaper fabrications. "John A. Macdonald's life made perfect tabloid fodder" the book begins, seemingly unaware that there were no tabloids in his day. This book, however, is tabloid history. As such, it might be valued by some in the tabloid/history-for-dummies audience. If you know anything at all about Sir John A. Macdonald, and want to know more about his private life, your best recourse after the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* is still those dusty old copies of Donald Creighton's *The Young Politician* and *The Old Chieftain*, supplemented by Louise Reynolds' very good biography, *Agnes*, and Sandra Gwyn's brilliant popular history of Ottawa in the age of Macdonald and Laurier, *The Private Capital*. Our first prime minister deserves a better fate than such victimization.

Reviewed by **Michael Bliss** who has retired from the University of Toronto and is now an independent scholar.



TUNNEL VISION

Marginal Man: The Dark Vision of Harold Innis
by Alexander John Watson
University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2006
525 pp., $65 hardcover

It can be convincingly argued that University of Toronto economist Harold Innis essentially created Canadian history in his 1930 book, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, by writing from a Canadian perspective, more specifically, from the points of view of the prolific, persecuted beaver and the trappers and traders who profited from European demand for its skin. Biographer Alexander John Watson takes his title from Innis's conviction that the energy of a civilization is drawn from its margins, or hinterlands – in this case the Canadian northwest – and that the activities of people living there, however humble and obscure, are more important than the pursuits of imperial kings and politicians. Further, Innis's recognition of the fur trade's dependence on Canada's network of rivers and lakes is often credited as a precursor of his colleague Marshall McLuhan's analysis of electronic communications networks.

Watson, however, completely ignores the enormous amount of fur-trade research that has been done, especially from an aboriginal perspective, since Innis died in 1952 and lets *The Fur Trade in Canada* stand unchallenged. Inexplicably, he concentrates on Innis's late, unfinished research into communications, undertaken before every living room had a television set – research that Watson charitably calls "cryptic." Innis's contemporary critics called it incoherent, whimsical, atrocious, repetitive, simplistic, and unreadable. Watson claims in his introduction that Innis suffered a "mental collapse." He documents, at length, Innis's increasingly obsessive/compulsive research habits, but nothing in Innis's writings or behaviour is remotely disturbing enough to justify the "dark vision" in Watson's title.

Nor was Innis marginalized as a scholar to the extent Watson would have us believe; Watson himself complains that Innis became an icon. In Innis's relatively brief career – he died of cancer at fifty-eight – he was one of Canada's most celebrated intellectuals, much in demand as a speaker at international conferences, a passionate advocate for academic freedom and independent universities, and a vigorous proponent of his own successful career at the University of Toronto. He was

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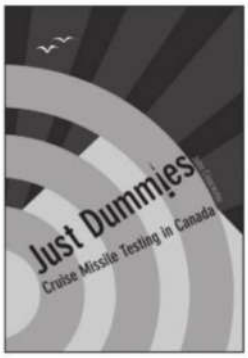

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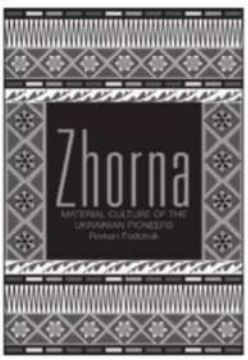

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as pigheaded and reactionary as his colleagues when it came to employing married women: he severed all communication with his best graduate student, Irene Biss, when she insisted on marrying Graham Spry, the father of Canadian public broadcasting. Watson believes, but cannot prove that Harold and Irene had an affair, but Innis himself, or his widow, Mary Quayle, laundered his archive of personal material.

Nor does Watson make his case for permanent psychological trauma suffered during Innis's brief, dangerous service in World War I. Wounded by shrapnel in the leg, Innis was evacuated after only months at the front, a fate his comrades likely envied. His loss of his Christian faith and his hatred of war were common reactions among veterans (though his war service financed his university education). By all accounts, Innis was shy but cordial, witty, and public spirited. He is criticized for ignoring his four children, but this is hardly evidence of psychotic or even unconventional behaviour.

Harold Innis's life was his work, and his work is missing in action from *Marginal Man*. Watson, immersed in Innis's writings for years – this book has the earmarks of a Ph.D. thesis – seems to assume his readers will be so familiar with Innis's numerous publications, including a book on the codfish industry, he need not quote from them or discuss them in detail. Watson leaves unexplored Innis's travels in the 1920s to frontier mill and mining towns, pioneering what he called "dirt" or feet-on-the-ground research and legitimizing a historical approach later adopted by journalists such as Pierre Berton, and he downplays Innis's outspoken, prescient opposition to American imperialism.

Is Innis's theory of creative peripheries relevant to a wired, global village? Was it ever more than colonial Canadian wishful thinking by the man who made the beaver our national symbol? Watson doesn't address these issues, and for all its excessive length, *Marginal Man* fails to answer the famous question posed by the University of Toronto's Innis College student song: "Who the Hell was Harold Innis?"

Reviewed by **Heather Robertson**, a historian/journalist in the tradition of Pierre Berton.

MORE BOOKS

Turning Back the Fenians:
New Brunswick's Last Colonial Campaign
By Robert L. Dallison
Goose Lane Editions, Fredricton, 2006
131 pp., $16.95 paper

New Brunswick experienced its own brand of international terrorism in the 1860s. Irish immigrants in the United States were eager to help the Fenian Brotherhood overthrow the British in Ireland. American Fenian sympathizers, eager to aid the cause, invaded British North America with the intention of holding it hostage. The best target in North America was New Brunswick, with its large Irish population and its undefended boundaries. In the spring of

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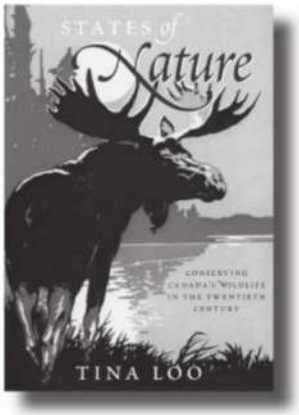
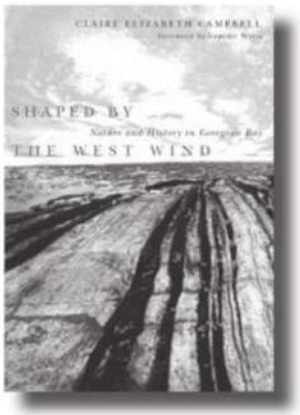


States of Nature
Conserving Canada's Wildlife in the Twentieth Century
Tina Loo

320 pages, 37 b/w photos, 1 map
paper $29.95

Loo uses the history of Canadian wildlife conservation as a lens through which to view the changing attitude of Canadians to wildlife in the twentieth century… It is this kind of reassessment that makes States of Nature *such a welcome addition to the literature on wildlife conservation*
– Bill Waiser, *The Beaver*

Loo assembles a fascinating parade of characters whose far-from uniform and far-from-simple views of wildlife, and humanity's relationships to it, both charted and changed Canadians' attitudes towards nature in the twentieth century.
– from the foreword by Graeme Wynn



Shaped by the West Wind
Nature and History in Georgian Bay
Claire Elizabeth Campbell

320 pages, 15 colour photos, 11 maps
paper $29.95

Campbell gives a well-reasoned and reflective yet unromanticized account of a place that has captivated many people for centuries (herself and myself included). Her prose is crisp and fluid, and the book is a true pleasure to read.
– Nik Luka, *University of Toronto Quarterly*

This is not only a book that travels from Samuel de Champlain to Sea-Doos, but one that incorporates elements of art history, public history, literary criticism, geography, and other disciplines in doing so.
– Alan MacEachern, *Ontario History*

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1866, one thousand Fenians gathered along the border of New Brunswick. British soldiers were called in to support the New Brunswick militia and a squadron of warships arrived. Seeing such power, the enemy retreated and refocused their efforts on central Canada.

In *Turning Back the Fenians: New Brunswick's Last Colonial Campaign*, military historian Robert L. Dallison tells the story of this pivotal moment in Canadian history. Intruders pushed their way into the St. Croix River area, threatening the people living there. This gripping tale is recounted in a slim, pocket-sized book; it is Volume 8 in Goose Lane's New Brunswick Military Heritage Series. Though slim, the book's format covers its bases, with accompanying images, a complete index, glossary of terms, and short biographies of key personalities. In a swiftly paced style, Dallison analyzes the enduring legacy of the Fenian affair and its lasting impact, both politically and militarily. The Fenians forced New Brunswick to vamp up its milita, and more importantly, it significantly forced the debate over Confederation. "For pro-Confederates, the Fenian crisis was a blessing," Dallison concludes. Ironically, the Fenians helped Canada pull itself together, with defense as an overriding impetus for cohesion.

The Maple Leaf Forever:
A Celebration of Canadian Symbols
By Donna and Nigel Hutchins; photography by Matthew Beverly
The Boston Mills Press, Erin, Ontario, 2006
224 pp., $59.95 hardcover

Capturing the icons of a big country such as Canada requires an equally big book. Dive into the gorgeous pages of *The Maple Leaf Forever*, a hefty collection of images celebrating three Canadian icons: the Mountie, Maple Leaf, and beaver. Donna and Nigel Hutchins explore the diverse ways our national symbols have been incorporated into our commercial, political, and cultural practices, illustrating their integral role in forming a national identity.

Captions are kept brief, letting the photographs by Matthew Beverly do most of the talking. Rather than simply dropping images onto the page, careful and creative art direction piles them into a collage or singles them out on a white or black backdrop. They are interlaced, grouped, and placed in settings like works of still-life art.

Sometimes readers view the entire object, other times they zoom in to appreciate finer details. Each 22.5-inch spread (two facing pages) encourages lingering, but variety gives the book a dynamic momentum that propels the reader forward.

Toys, logos, bottles, posters, puzzles, utensils, artwork, books, badges – the list of items is extensive. Most readers will find at least one they recognize, perhaps even own. Whether eliciting a surprised guffaw or sentimental sigh, each page of *The Maple Leaf Forever* delights with colour, flair, and pride.

Some of the books reviewed here are available at a special subscriber's discount price in our General Store, found within this issue, or online at <TheBeaver.ca>.

Caught
Montreal's Modern Girls and the Law, 1869–1945
by Tamara Myers

'Exploring the lives of "delinquent" girls in Montreal, *Caught* integrates an analysis of class, ethnicity, and gender into a comprehensive and sensitive account of girls' conflicts with the law, their criminalization, and their incarceration. Myers's study is an important and insightful contribution to Canadian women's, legal, social, and youth history.'

Joan Sangster,
Trent University

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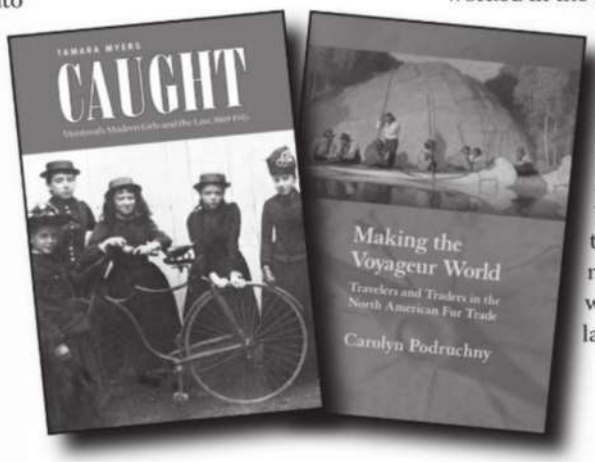

Making the Voyageur World
Travelers and Traders in the North American Fur Trade
by Carolyn Podruchny

Making the Voyageurs' World illuminates the social and cultural world of French-Canadian voyageurs who worked in the eighteenth and nineteenth century Montreal-based fur trade, paddling canoes, shipping goods, staffing interior posts, and trading with Aboriginal people. This book places voyageur squarely in the centre of historical narrative as serious people with compelling stories and lasting consequences.

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Christopher Moore

Rereading James Gray

Pierre Berton lived in Toronto. James Gray lived in Calgary. When it comes to a national reputation, is geography destiny?

We shouldn't believe that Canadian writing began in the late 1960s – and historical writing even later. Recall, for instance, James H. Gray. Gray's first book, *The Winter Years*, appeared way back in 1966 and immediately gained a large and enthusiastic audience across the country. A vigorously written memoir/history of the Depression and a young Winnipegger's experience of it, *The Winter Years* became the first of a stream of James Gray histories of the prairie West.

Gray's pioneering role among popular historical writers was part of what attracted Calgary writer Brian Brennan – himself the author of several books on Alberta history – to write *How the West Was Written: The Life and Times of James H. Gray*. In Gray, Brennan saw an inspiration – someone who wrote a dozen lively Canadian histories that sold well and widely, winning critical praise and many honours.

Brennan finds in Gray not only an inspiration, but also an object lesson in the challenges of writing history in Canada. Gray's first book? He actually wrote it in the 1940s and could not get it published for twenty years. Although he was both prolific and popular, he hardly made a living from his books. And both Gray and Brennan have pondered the same question: Is it possible to be a successful Canadian writer if you don't live in Toronto and your writing is considered regional?

Like Berton, like Broadfoot, like Newman (all of whom Gray could claim to predate as a historian), Jimmy Gray began his writing career in newspapers. The others all came of age during or after World War II; Gray's formative years were the twenties and the thirties. He had grown up in the hustle and flow of the new prairie West in the full flood of its growth – and then saw that growth stopped by the Depression. He had found his subject.

RON WATTS

Writer James Gray popularized the history of the Canadian West, adding vitality to a style of writing that had been considered dry and academic.

Gray had left school at sixteen. "When it had become clear in 1931 that our stay on unemployment relief was likely to be prolonged, I decided to continue my education by reading my way through the public library," he once recalled. Duly educated, he joined the *Winnipeg Free Press* in 1935 and later ran a couple of magazines in Calgary.

What launched Gray's historical career was the curtailing of his career in journalism. He turned to books because his strong views and independent streak did not fit well with the rise of publisher-dominated journalism. Brennan, too, knows that situation well. He's also a refugee from newspapers; indeed, he conceived his first book in 1999 while walking the picket line at the *Calgary Herald*.

Brennan's biography documents Gray's many achievements, and rereading James Gray's books confirm them. All of his books have terrific narrative drive, vivid characters, convincing details, and strong sentences. "He was a storyteller," Brennan told me recently, adding that Gray was willing to create dialogue and even repeat yarns that were so good that no one should fact-check them.

But James Gray was not James Frey. Unlike the recently controversial author of the disputed memoir *A Million Little Pieces*, Gray was no yarn-spinner on things that mattered. He looked for big historical themes and argued out well-sustained theses.

The Winter Years evokes the hardships of city life during the Depression, but it is also a history of governmental failures to grasp the relief crisis. *Men Against the Desert* is a history of how western farmers and Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act officials fought back and made Palliser's Triangle not just agriculturally viable, but also the world's breadbasket in the 1950s. *The Boy from Winnipeg*, partly memoir, is mostly about the shaping of urban life on the Prairies before World War I.

Red Lights on the Prairies and *Booze*, both built from Gray's own dogged research into the ill-documented undersides of prairie life, are not merely lurid stories. Gray argues that prohibition in 1914–1924 broke the wide-open, hard-drinking "brothel/booze culture" of the pre-war Prairies. It caused a drastic reduction in violence, crime, and family disintegration that was sustained even after controlled liquor consumption returned.

This "quintet of prairie histories I never intended to write in the first place" was followed by several more books. His last book, a substantial biography of Calgary's first prime minister, R.B. Bennett, was published by a scholarly press in 1991. To the pleased surprise of Gray, no slavish worshipper of academic history-writing, it won him academic honours.

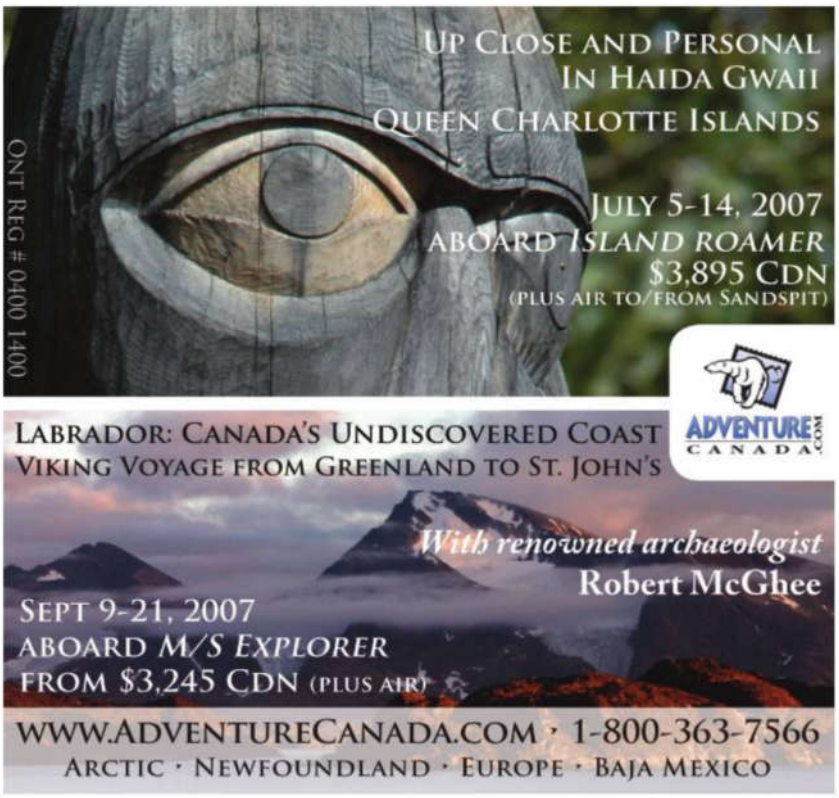
Brian Brennan salutes Gray's persistence and his prodigious energy for research and writing, but he notes and shares two concerns of Gray's. Can Canada sustain writers? And can a regional writer gain national recognition?

Brennan says, "Gray didn't mind if unsuccessful or unpopular writers never made any money, but he said, 'I'm a successful writer. Why can't successful writers make a living in this country?'" (Much of Gray's income came not from books, but from smart investments in Alberta's 1950s oil boom.) Out of these concerns, Gray became a founder of the Writers' Union of Canada in 1973, and he fought hard for writers' economic concerns: royalty terms, copyright licensing, lending rights. "We are still fighting those battles today," reflects Brennan, himself a Writers' Union board member. "I might not have written that chapter if it was not so interesting to me. But I'm an old newspaper guy who turned to writing books just as he did, and I, too, care about making a living." (Full disclosure: I, too, have been active in the Writers' Union, and for many of the same reasons.)

Can a writer achieve and sustain national attention without living in Toronto? It would seem Gray proved you can. But Brennan, himself Calgary-based, believes "being in Calgary rather than Toronto – that probably did limit his reputation … Gradually he became a Calgary writer while Pierre Berton became a Canadian writer."

James Gray was ninety-two when he died in 1998. Near the end of his life, widowed and almost blind, he feared that his work, like the history it chronicled, was destined to be neglected and forgotten. Brennan describes how reassured Gray was by the republication of his principal works by the Calgary-based publisher Fifth House. Now that he joins the handful of historians who have their own biographies, perhaps his legacy is not so fragile.

Brian Brennan's *How the West Was Written: The Life and Times of James H. Gray* was published by Fifth House in 2006.



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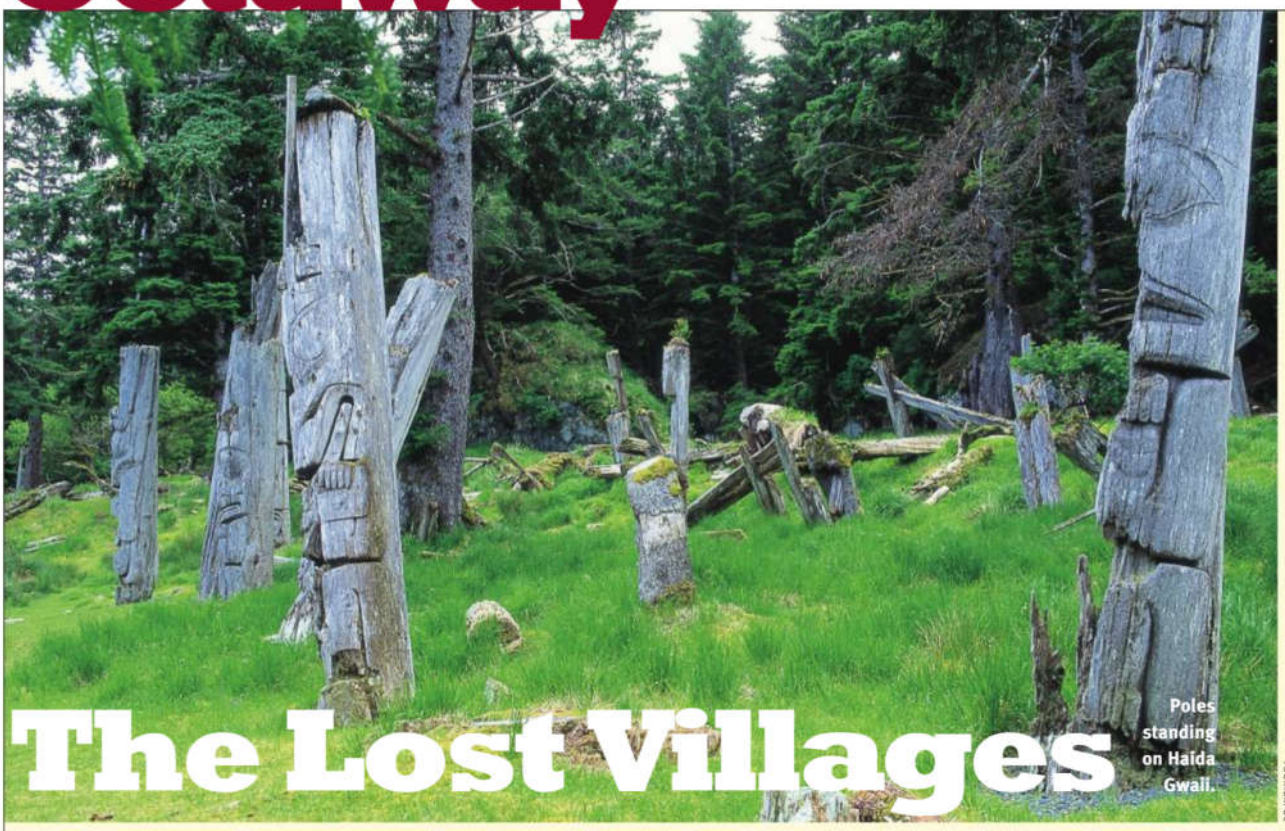

The Lost Villages

Poles standing on Haida Gwaii.

TOURISM BC

Dennis Horwood explores the ancient history and culture of Haida Gwaii, travelling far back in "island time."

When speaking of Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands), images of fishing, wildlife viewing, beachcombing, and wandering through rainforests come to mind. Yet just beyond the beaches and beneath the towering trees lie some of our West Coast's most interesting historical places, including ancient native villages and remnants of European settlements and industry.

Haida villages that long predate European contact reveal much of this early history, even though they are now shadows of their former selves. Ancient villages were typically located along beachfronts. A row of houses, sometimes numbering more than thirty, stretched along the shoreline. Each faced the sea, as did the numerous intricately carved poles interspersed among the buildings.

Larger villages had as many as seven hundred inhabitants, although in the summer months they might seem almost abandoned. Many residents migrated to summer camps, focusing their time on food gathering. With the arrival of winter, families returned to their home villages to store their wares and prepare for celebrations, such as potlatches and pole raisings.

Today, museums have laid claim to many poles, leaving the few remaining vulnerable to moss and mould. Only a few old village sites, such as K̲'uuna llnagaay and SG̲ang Gwaay llnagaay (formerly referred to as Skedans and Ninstints), have untouched poles standing in their original location.

During the summer months, Haida watchmen live at both of these sites, acting as guardians and guides. They explain to visitors that a special kind of pole, a mortuary pole, would be erected to honour the death of a past chief or someone of nobility. Rather than providing an earthen burial, human remains were carefully placed in a cedar box atop an elaborately carved pole. The elongated and sometimes decorative side of the box gave the pole a "T" shape.

Visitors to Haida Gwaii will need either a boat or plane to visit nearly every ancient village on the island. If this is beyond a traveller's means, the Haida Gwaii Museum in Skidegate has

DENIS HORWOOD

A young girl examines an ancient pole at Skedans, a village located on the neck of a peninsula at the head of Cumshewa Inlet.

several original poles on display. Newer poles, also of traditional design, stand near the museum and in front of the Skidegate band office. Their proximity offers an opportunity to compare old and new designs.

A special attraction is an eighteen-metre-long canoe stored in a building alongside the museum. This craft, completed in 1986, can be compared to two unfinished canoes discovered by loggers near Port Clements. For unknown reasons, the Haida abandoned them before they were finished, likely more than one hundred years ago. Their rough shape gives mute testimony to the time and commitment given to working with such rudimentary implements. Since they lie three kilometres from tidewater, moving such massive forms through the underbrush by human power is a task almost unimaginable in today's world.

Non-native settlers who came to these islands in the early 1900s faced similar challenges in overcoming the archipelago's harsh conditions. Forestland dominated, underbrush hindered travel, and what open land remained made poor farmland. Nevertheless, many hardy souls made a supreme effort to etch out a living as ranchers, prospectors, or farmers.

One of the most interesting places to visit is the Evans homestead at Nadu, constructed in 1911. The original dwelling – cut, sawn, and shaped by master axe-men Alec Johnson and Ole Anderson – has collapsed in a heap. In stark contrast, rhododendrons planted by Mrs. Evans remain, reaching heights of more than eight metres. Nearby, and even more impressive, is a mortar-free stone breakwater. The massive wall of rock remains intact save for a small portion that has broken away. Clearly, transporting so many rocks with only a wheelbarrow or horse would have been a monumental achievement. Regrettably, the remains of most settlers' efforts have succumbed to the elements. Leaning fence posts, rotting bridges, or shallow drainage ditches provide only hints of previous habitation.

This is not the case, however, with the islands' railroads!

Evidence of railroad activity is still visible and accessible. During the first half of the twentieth century, the A.P. Allison Logging Company operated the only true railroad on the islands between Gillatt Arm and Skidegate Lake. Although the tracks have long been removed, a monolithic fuel tank remains intact, standing like a sentry over the remains of railroad debris.

A very different kind of railroad operated east of Aero on Louise Island. During World War II, logging trucks with hard rubber tires ran on hewn log rails. Lightweight yet strong, Sitka spruce hauled on these wooden rails was vital in the manufacturing of some combat aircraft. A few of the old logging trucks can be found rusting away beneath the dense canopy of cedar and hemlock lining the beach. A trailer is half buried in the intertidal zone, encrusted with barnacles and seaweed.

Such images are symbolic of many island endeavors. Settlers ventured to these islands with grand schemes and desires. In the end, farms and ranches were abandoned, mineral deposits were depleted, and two world wars drew many of the youngest of the settlers away – only a few returned. The forest or ocean has all but covered their tracks.

Dennis Horwood lives in Kitimat, B.C., and is the author of several books on the Haida Gwaii region.

If you go ...

Before planning a trip to Haida Gwaii, contact the Queen Charlotte Islands information centre. Permission is required for anyone wishing to visit an ancient Haida village site. The information centre can help arrange a visit through either the Masset or Skidegate band office. To visit some of the historic sites covered in this article requires some planning. For instance, K'uuna llnagaay (on Louise Island) and SGang Gwaay (within Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve) are only accessible by boat or aircraft. Fortunately, only a car is required to see the canoes at Port Clements; drive approximately 15 kilometres south of the town, and you will find a short trail from a parking lot leads to the site. Moving along to Nadu, follow Nadu Road, 19 kilometres north of Port Clements. Follow the road to its terminus then walk toward tidewater. Gumboots are recommended. Some sites in this article are open on a seasonal basis. For updated information, contact:

Queen Charlotte Islands Information Centre
3220 Wharf Street,
Queen Charlotte, BC
V0T 1T0
T: (250) 559-8952
W: www.qcinfo.ca

Haida Gwaii Museum and Haida Heritage Centre
Second Beach, Box 1371
Skidegate, BC V0T 1S0
T: (250) 559-4643
W: www.haidagwaiimuseum.com
W: www.haidaheritage-centre.com

Your Story

Cousin John

Chris Raible's tale of a clever Scotsman, an ingenious land scheme, and a very tiny house.

"Here it is," I announced, "'Cousin John's' house. This is where he lived while he laid out the plans for this city." My nearly eighty-year-old uncle, Sheffield Galt, looked puzzled until I explained that the structure we were admiring in Guelph's Riverside Park was not really John Galt's original house. It was a scale model of the much larger log villa Galt had built for himself back in 1827.

Referring to John Galt, the noted Scottish novelist and founder of the Canada Company, as "Cousin John" was a family joke. Some sixty years earlier, my uncle, as the teenaged son of an American professor at Yenching University in China, had hand-set the type and then printed a small book: *The Galt Families: Notes on their Origin and their History*. The product of his father's (my grandfather's) years of searching Galt genealogy, its "Galts in Scotland" section included notes on John Galt's life, ancestry, and descendants. My uncle thus knew that John Galt had been a writer, famous for his novels about life in the Scottish Lowlands, such as *The Annals of the Parish*. What he did not know was John Galt's connection with Canada.

When Uncle Sheffield came to visit us in Ontario a few years ago, his single request had been to visit the town of Galt, named for our famous, albeit distant, relative. I explained that Galt was gone, absorbed into the city of Cambridge, but proposed instead a trip to the larger city of Guelph, founded by John Galt. As we stood by the model of his homestead, I told my uncle something of Cousin John's Canadian story.

In the early 1820s, John Galt, a gifted writer having difficulty making a living with his pen, needed to augment his income. While living in London, he seized an opportunity to become the British agent for a group of Canadians. These were settlers in Upper Canada who had personally suffered property damage during the War of 1812 but had never received compensation for their losses from the British government. Galt was to help them get their oft-promised money, and the settlers were to pay him a commission.

The government had no money budgeted for these payments, so Galt proposed a source for the funds: the sale of

An engraving of John Galt from the frontispiece for volume one of his autobiography.

Crown-owned, unsettled Canadian land. In 1791, when the new province of Upper Canada was split off from the old province of Quebec, one-seventh of all the land had been "reserved," set aside for the Crown and kept from Loyalists and other settlers moving into the new province. These reserved lands were ultimately to provide the government with a source of income. Another one-seventh had been reserved for the support of "a Protestant clergy." More than thirty years later, there were still millions of unsurveyed acres of this "waste" land awaiting settlement.

In this period following the Napoleonic Wars, Galt was aware that millions of people in the British Isles were in economic hardship – the "redundant population" some termed them. Many of these unfortunates might be induced to immigrate to Canada, but they needed encouragement, initial support to begin new lives, and a plan allowing them to purchase their own farms over time.

Galt conceived a plan to meet three needs: for the war-losses claims to be paid, for the government to obtain income from its vacant land, and for assisting would-be emigrants in crossing the Atlantic and purchasing their own land. He created a private corporation, the Canada Company, chartered in 1824. It would purchase huge tracts of reserved land from the government, survey and divide them into farms, build roads, establish towns, and do whatever else was necessary to make them habitable. The company would also recruit British emigrants, assist them with their travel, and help with their initial needs as they cleared and settled the farms they would eventually own. Galt convinced the government, raised the private capital, recruited the emigrants, and found the skilled assistants – essentially devising the largest land-development scheme in the history of the British Empire.

Initially, the venture was astoundingly successful. Galt came to Upper Canada to help implement his scheme. But he soon found himself at loggerheads with Sir Peregrine Maitland, the lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, and with members of the ruling elite (later dubbed the "Family Compact"). Galt's private, independent Canada Company was assuming responsibility for almost a third of the arable land in the colony and, in the process, providing the provincial government with perhaps half its income. Almost inevitably, the company threatened the established order.

Galt was an outsider, a newcomer, and, for all his genius, land surveys, and township plans, severely lacking in political skills and an understanding of the political territory. He did not understand the ways of the provincial capital of York – "one of the vilest

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blue-devil haunts on the face of the earth," he would later describe it.

Moreover, Galt, a man of an independent disposition, did not like taking orders from governors or from investors. He sympathized with the strains and stresses of the first company settlers and their needs for additional help. He was impatient with his financial backers' demands for quick return on their investments. He did not always pay attention to details, go through proper channels, wait for formal approvals, or understand the political implications of his behaviour.

Although the Canada Company ultimately flourished, Galt could not cope – pulled apart in the triple stress of the investors' demands in Britain for better financial returns, the settlers' needs for more assistance, and the provincial administrators' expectations of quicker results. After two years' exhausting effort in Upper Canada, he returned to Britain, financially disgraced and psychologically almost destroyed. Back in Scotland he resumed, with modest success, his literary career. But he was burned out with Canada. In Galt's dual career as writer and businessman, he was far more successful as a man of letters than a man of ledgers.

Nonetheless, he made a firm mark on this country. In time, his Canada Company made possible the prosperity of much of the territory from Guelph to Goderich. His son, Alexander Tilloch Galt, permanently settled here and became an extraordinarily successful Canadian businessman and political figure, a Father of Confederation. His grandson, Elliot Torrance Galt, was also a formidable figure, important to the economic development of the Canadian West.

John Galt died in 1839, never appreciating the impact of his company, never knowing the prominence of his descendants, never realizing the mark he had made. A century and a half later, I was pleased to tell his story, and for my uncle to share my pride in our Cousin John and his place in Canadian history.

Chris Raible is a former columnist and a regular contributor to *The Beaver*.

Coming in *The Beaver* April • May

The Amateur Cup
In the early days of the Stanley Cup, big-city teams and the underdog Rat Portage Thistles battle on the ice.
BY JIM CHLIBOYKO

Yukon Rising
Renovated, razed, rebuilt, and reborn, Fort Selkirk shows that when picking a site for a fort, think location, location, location.
BY PAMELA KLAFFKE

They Shoot Electors, Don't They?
At turns violent, tortuous, and hilarious, the history of our electoral processes almost makes today's politics appear civilized.
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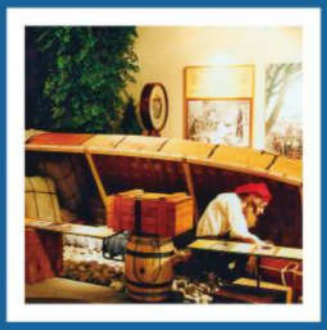

Do you have a history or heritage
project that will spark interest in Canada's exciting past?

Canada's National History Society is pleased to announce

The Hbc Local History Grant Program

A grant of up to **$1,000** could be yours,
to assist in starting up your project or program!
Application deadline: April 27, 2007.

For an application, or more details, visit:
www.hbchistoryfoundation.ca or 1-800-816-6777

Hbc

Canada's National History Society
publisher of **The Beaver** *Canada's History Magazine* and
Kayak *Canada's History Magazine for Kids*

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Founded in 1994 to popularize Canadian history, the work of Canada's National History Society includes **The Beaver, Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids,** the **Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History** to honour the country's best history teachers, and the **Pierre Berton Award** to recognize those who have brought history to a wider audience.

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The Beaver was founded in 1920 by the Hudson's Bay Company, whose commitment to the History Society and its programs continues today through the ***Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation***.

Society Goes Mainstage at the Confederation Centre for the Arts

LOUISE VESSEY

PEI Premier Pat Binns, Deborah Morrison, Tom Symons, and Mark Starowicz at the conclusion of the Thomas H.B. Symons Lecture.

The History Society is often invited to participate in events and activities that broaden our perspective and sense of community. On November 8, 2006, we had such an opportunity when board member Mark Starowicz was invited to present at the Third Annual Symons Lecture at the Confederation Centre in Charlottetown, PEI.

The Confederation Centre of the Arts was established in Charlottetown as a centenary tribute to the Fathers of Confederation, who met there in 1864. Their annual Symons Lecture is a key part of their public policy program, honouring Professor Thomas H.B. Symons, a long-time supporter and board member of the Confederation Centre. It provides a national platform for a distinguished Canadian to reflect on the evolution of Confederation.

This year, Mark Starowicz made an eloquent and urgent case for the continuing value of public television such

MUSEUM PROFILE

SHIRLEY RENDER COLLECTION

Western Canada Aviation Museum

The Western Canada Aviation Museum offers a unique mix of history and science. Enter through "Gate 1" – the original Air Canada passenger terminal. Step back in time and let the pioneer aviators of the North take you on an inspirational journey. Visitors learn about tales from the sky and great ideas (and not so great ideas) in flight.

Highlights include the original aircraft hangar, several one-of-a-kind aircraft, and historic military jets, bush planes, and commercial aircraft. The museum was also first to showcase a little known aspect of Canada's history – Canada's pioneer women pilots.

The "Women in Aviation" exhibit features mannequins of Jeanne Gilbert, British Columbia's first licensed female pilot (1928); Margaret Littlewood of Toronto, one of the first female flying instructors (1939) and the only female Link trainer instructor during World War II; Major Leah Mosher, one of the first three female pilots in the Canadian Forces (1979); and Captain Rosella Bjornson, Canada's first female airline pilot (1973).

Western Canada Aviation Museum
Hangar T-2, 958 Ferry Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0Y8
<www.wcam.mb.ca>

Museum Partners Program

Membership in Canada's National History Society provides reduced admission to the following Canadian museums:

The McCord Museum, Montréal
Canadian Museum of Civilization, Gatineau
The Exploration Place, Prince George
Western Development Museum, Saskatoon
The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg
Dalnavert Museum, Winnipeg
Western Canada Aviation Museum, Winnipeg
Niagara Historical Society & Museum, Niagara-on-the-Lake
New Brunswick Museum, Saint John
Yarmouth County Museum, Yarmouth

A discount of at least 10 percent on regular admissions will be given upon presentation of your membership card. Some restrictions may apply. All subscribers to *The Beaver* are automatically members of the Society.

as the CBC provides, believing that the medium has a much greater role to play than simply to provide viewers with entertainment and advertisers with access to consumer markets. "The airwaves are our national arteries of discourse, the means by which we tell our stories, negotiate our political and social values and communicate across regions and generations. These airwaves, these digital arteries, are more vital to us than many nations on earth because we are a vast country made up of a thousand diversities and particularities. We are a living negotiation, an evolving narrative."

The Symons Lecture also provided an opportunity for History Society President and CEO Deborah Morrison to comment on the History Society's own commitment to presenting and celebrating Canada's stories. More importantly, the event provided a welcome opportunity to meet with long-time *Beaver* subscribers in the area, as well as recruit some new members. The many activities organized around the public lecture itself, the pleasant pace of PEI in autumn, and the historical "feel" of all the venues made it a perfect destination for those looking to recharge and restore their sense of "Canadianness."

To read Mark Starowicz's speech, please visit <www.confederationcentre.com/symons>.

H. FIELD

Calgary-based editor Jill Foran steers *Kayak* in exciting new directions.

Transitions

Over the past few months there have been a number of staff changes at the History Society we wish to let our members know about.

Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids has a new editorial team. **Jill Foran**, who has been an editorial advisor with the magazine since last July, has taken over as **Editor** with the January issue, and **Bryan Pezzi** will join her as **Art Director** beginning with the March edition. Based in Calgary, the new editorial duo have a depth of experience working together in children's book publishing, most recently with **Altitude Publishing**, producers of the *Amazing Stories* paperback series. They replace the founding editorial team of **Aron Slipacoff** and **Glenn Toddun**, who after two years

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CANADA'S HISTORY SOCIETY

of Canada's National History Society's newest edition have moved on to pursue new projects and career opportunities.

A recent addition to *The Beaver* editorial team is **Richard F.J. Wood**, who joined as **Senior Editor** beginning with the August/September 2006 issue. Also, **Joel Ralph** has joined the History Society as **Educational Projects Coordinator**.

After twelve years with the History Society, we wish **Catherine Burns, Director of Finance and Development**, well as she leaves the History Society to pursue a new career direction in business and technology consulting. Ms. Burns has been a dedicated part of the History Society team since it was first established in 1994, aiding in such key decisions as the sale and transfer

PHILL POTTER

Ian McKelvie joins the History Society as Director of Marketing.

of *The Beaver* from Hbc and, more recently, in overseeing the modernization of our circulation management systems, as well as the implementation of our annual direct mail appeal for membership donations.

Also leaving the History Society is **Gale Whiteside, Manager of Member Services**. She will be replaced by **Ian McKelvie**, formerly with *Canadian Geographic*, who will be assuming a new position as **Director of Marketing** with the History Society, integrating Ms. Whiteside's responsibilities within a larger mandate for the overall circulation, planning, and marketing for *The Beaver* and *Kayak* magazines.

Society to lead new Hbc program supporting local history projects

"Can you help us to find ways to reach deeper into Canadian communities and support local projects that promote history?" That's how the conversation began with the newly elected board members of the Hbc History Foundation last May, including incoming Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Jerry Zucker.

Over summer 2006, the Hbc and History Society staff worked out the details of a new program that will provide easier access to small start-up grants to fuel big ideas for improving local programming and promotion of Canadian history.

And the timing for this couldn't be better. In October 2006, the Association for Canadian Studies released a new survey of Canadians' perceptions of their own knowledge of Canadian history. Although respondents were quick to give themselves higher than average marks for personal knowledge of general Canadian history, the survey confirmed the growing generation gap in interest in the past. While more than 70 percent of respondents in retirement and those over the age of 55 rated their knowledge of community history as "strong," almost half of respondents under the age of 34 scored themselves as "weak." More importantly, Canadians of all ages and geographic locations recognized that there were many perspectives and stories they knew little about.

As one Albertan historical society volunteer explained, "Sometimes all an organization needs to get a project going is that little bit of financial support to guarantee that the basic out-of-pocket costs will be covered – it's amazing how much that can leverage others to contribute."

The Hbc Canadian Local History Grants Program is aimed at providing just that kind of spark to new initiatives. The grants will be available to small and medium-sized museums, archives, historical societies, and other locally based organizations engaged in Canadian history projects. Deadline for applications is **April 28, 2006,** and complete application forms are available at <www.hbchistoryfoundation.ca>.

Do you know someone who is changing the way we learn about Canada's past?

Tell us about them!

SINCE 1994, CANADA'S NATIONAL HISTORY SOCIETY HAS ESTABLISHED TWO NATIONAL AWARDS TO HONOUR ACHIEVEMENT IN ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF CANADIAN HISTORY.

The Pierre Berton Award, so named after its first recipient, honours excellence in promoting Canadian history to a public audience. Individuals or organizations may be nominated whose written work has brought Canadian history to a national audience through publications, film, radio, television, theatre, or the Web in either official language.

The Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History recognize achievement in the classroom at Grade levels K–12.Whether nominees have been teaching in the classroom for three years or thirty, the History Society celebrates leadership and innovation in teaching our young people about Canada's past. We welcome submissions from elementary, middle, and senior school classroom teachers. Teachers can submit a project, a body of work, or a group or school-wide initiative.

Nominations are now being accepted for both the 2007 Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History and the 2007 Pierre Berton Award.

Nominations must be received by April 28, 2007, and should be sent to
Canada's National History Society
478-167 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0T6

Further details about the awards and the nomination process can be found at our website <HistorySociety.ca>

Album

David C. Brownlow, who submitted this photograph, is the son of Ralph Nelles Brownlow. He joined the dental car as a baby in January 1933. He lives in Belwood, Ontario.

I've been drilling on the railroad all the livelong day

Ralph Nelles Brownlow, a dentist of sterling repute, is working on a young patient in a rail car specially outfitted for the practice of dentistry. Your first thoughts may run along these teeth-rattling lines: *Surely the car isn't moving!* It's not. The dental car is stationed at Ramsey, Ontario. It's December 1931, and Dr. Brownlow is in his third month as peripatetic tooth-care provider for the CPR's first Ontario railway dental car, which travels from Cartier, near Sudbury, a thousand kilometres west to Kenora. A free service to people in isolated communities along Northern Ontario's main line, the dental car is also home to Brownlow and his wife, Violet, and will remain so until 1935 when they settle into something in Toronto not rolling along a train track. This first CPR dental car is wood sided, a conversion of a 1904 sleeping car. In 1958, it will come out of service, its equipment and furnishing transferred to a steel replacement car for service along the main line. But in 1971, it, too, is scrapped and the CPR's dental car, like wooden dentures, is consigned to history.

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied (please don't send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Or email your submission to album@thebeaver.ca. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The Beaver's Québec City's 400th Anniversary Travel Contest

WIN a chance to ring in the New Year in Québec City.
Explore the rich culture and celebrate the 400th Anniversary
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Your New Year's Weekend getaway package includes:

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- 2 nights luxury accommodation at the historic Fairmont Le Château Frontenac including dinner for two with wine
- 2 breakfasts for two
- 1 special in-room welcome gift basket
- 2 tickets to Québec City's 400th Anniversary Opening Event on December 31st, 2007
- 1 special welcome package from Québec City's 400th Anniversary Organizing Committee
- Approximate retail value: $4000
  Every subscription order automatically entered to win*

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For full contest details on how to enter visit The Beaver.ca

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